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The MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

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Issued In the Interest of The Parish Ministry

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THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

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the editor's page

Writers' Conference Attended

This summer your editor fulfilled an ambition of many years and attended the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference at Middlebury, Vermont, there to sit at the feet of such masters of the writing craft as Robert Frost, Carl Carmer, Catherine Drinker Bowen, and to rub elbows with many an aspiring writer and experienced editor. He wishes he might share with you some of the insights with which that Conference left him. They were valuable not only for our writing but for our sermon preparation as well. There was the inevitable emphasis on technique. "Economy of words—!" (How many preachers are there who could not profit from that counsel?) "Never send an adjective to do a noun's work." "Wherever possible use active rather than passive verbs." "Rhythm and flow are ingredients of good prose."

"Only hard work produces good writing," was another constant emphasis. One successful producer of short stories for national magazines told your editor that she wrote six hours a day for thirteen years before she hit the big time.

Editors of journals large and small (and even of so modest a journal as The Quarterly) appeared to have one experience in common. They are impressed both by the abundance of good writing and the surfeit of bad. Some manuscripts reach editors in such poor form that they are tempted to regard them as personal affronts. Poor typing, even poor spelling, are forgivable. But how shall we treat that manuscript which obviously has not even been re-read? "Anything worth doing is worth doing well," is a shopworn adage only because it is so true.

Want your manuscript to have a better chance with this or any publication? Look up a good writer's manual. A few hours with one will be to your eternal profit.

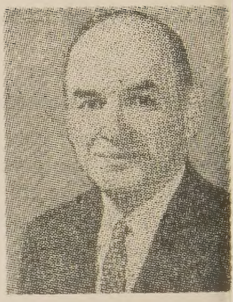
Another presumptuous word of counsel: Some summer when the opportunity permits, eschew that religious retreat and attend a writers' conference instead. There, too, you will find people who think seriously about the nature and problems of life, whose thought is inevitably "theological," who will both challenge and confirm your biases, who will supply you with plenty of grist for the sermon mill. You will take leave of them with the conviction that you have been in touch with many worlds. You will feel stimulated and refreshed.

Plymouth Pilgrimage

Our restless feet also found their way aboard the Mayflower II one hot August day, and we were pleased to feel more like one of the "saints" than the many "strangers" aboard, being, as we are, heirs of the Pilgrim-Congregational heritage. We knew enough of the Pilgrim story that we had no need to bother the guides with such questions as, "Where did Columbus sleep?"—a question which they testify is recurrent. We were glad, however, to welcome aboard this issue of The Quarterly Bob Bartlett's reminder of the Pilgrim story. It's one of the great stories of the annals of faith, and we are pleased that significant steps are being taken to see that not only Congregationalists but all Americans remember it.

New Appointment

This for a long time is the first issue of The Quarterly which has gone to bed without the help of Rev. Lawrence L. Durgin as editor of the Department of Theology. We are sorry to lose his valued services. We are pleased, however, to welcome to his place on The Quarterly staff Rev. Raymond E. Gibson, minister of the South Congregational Church in Pittsfield, Mass., whose superior acquaintance with contemporary theological thought especially qualifies him for the editorship of the Department of Theology.



Fathers and Brethren:

When you read this (if you do) you will be home from vacation and starting out on another year of busy-ness. Perhaps your church is like a spirited race horse, taking off at a gallop so fast you can hardly stay in the saddle. Maybe it is like an aged mule asleep in the sun who can be persuaded to get up and go by nothing short of a bonfire close to the tail. Anyhow, you are the one expected to make things go and fair game for everybody with a special axe to grind. The laity of your church would like to see the pews full on Sunday morning, the bank balance black on Monday morning, and the program humming every day of the week,—and you're just the chap to see if these things don't happen. If they do happen there is another tribe who writes for the religious press who will be quick to tell you it doesn't mean a thing, that "activity" is just as much a sign of the presence of Beelzebub as it is of the moving of the Holy Ghost. And just to keep things lively there is the whole race of us ecclesiastical bureaucrats whose sole excuse for existence is that we put burrs in your breeches to get you to organize,—organize missionary committees, social action committees, world service committees, evangelism committees, spiritual life committees, Christian education committees, prayer groups, "cell" groups, study groups, work groups, etc., etc.

In the midst of this feverish mobilization—and don't get me wrong, I'm all *for* mobilization—I'd like to sound a note of joy to compensate for all the frenzy.

"Where the Word of God is preached and the Sacraments are rightly administered, there without a doubt is a part of the true Church of God." This approximate quotation from John Calvin points to the glory of being a Pastor. You are set right in the middle of the "activity" that makes a church the Church. Nobody pushes you here. These are the things you desire to do because God called you to do them, and to you is given the holy privilege to preach and preside at the Lord's Table. Let no clamor divert you from the pursuit of this ministry. For it is in this ministry that all other ministry finds its source and meaning.

This does not mean that preaching and administering the sacraments constitute the whole task of a pastor. It means that if these central tasks are done aright a spiritual climate will be created in the midst of which all kinds of wonders may occur at any time. The history of the Church is a story of marvels bursting forth from the common life of people engaged in sharing the Word of God. The missionary movement, the Sunday School movement, the Social Gospel, yes, and the Ladies' Aid, the bean supper, and the every member canvass, have all happened upon the scene among people under a common compulsion to be God's people. Any effort to "promote" these ministries apart from their center and source is foredoomed to failure or to worse than failure, a sham success.

Therefore, off to the wars! "The day of march has come!" As the voices of the needlers, professional and amateur, rise on every side, let your purpose be steadfast to be a Pastor to the flock of God committed to your charge. If you are faithful you may be amazed at what God will do. Perhaps you are a specialist in counselling or "small groups." Maybe your special talent is for exciting missionary interest, or perhaps you are an "operator" who builds buildings and programs as Detroit builds Buicks. Maybe, and this is hardest, you are set in a parish where the Word is preached and the sacraments are administered with little if any visible result. Remember, we are only called to plant and water. The increase is with God. Our faithfulness is not rated on the basis of "production," but on the basis of marks only God can read written on the soul. Therefore, rejoice! You are called to the most blessed of all labors.

Fraternally yours,

Nathanael M. Guptill

THE MINISTER AND THE PARISH

"Maybe we Protestants are a bit mixed up . . . . we have repudiated the figure of the priest . . . ," says the author. Originally presented as an address at a Maine Conference, its charm impels us to publish it in its entirety.

PRIORITIES OF A PARISH PRIEST

by MALCOLM A. MACDUFFIE*

OUR CONFERENCE OFFICE exhibits an astounding number of virtues during any given calendar year. I would comment on one: it likes to know where it stands—often, when the rest of us are still prone. So it was when I was gently urged to supply a fitting title for this address. Having, in a weak moment, said that I would make it, I had dismissed the matter from the mind. Dr. Clark, who has never quite got used to my methods, then wrote me a letter asking the name of the unborn child!

This was almost too much. I remember rumpling the papers piled on my desk, peering in the table of contents of a book or two and asking our esteemed sexton if he had anything to suggest. The title you have heard was a kind of synthesis of results gleaned from these sources, plus a marked preference for alliteration. Actually, I am rather pleased with it! Perhaps a few of the ministers at this Conference have been held here, against all the claims of tobacco, fresh air and the coffee break, in hopes that they will be present when the scandal breaks. The whisper has gone among the pews, perhaps, that at last old Mac has gone over to Rome. Ministerial Relief has, before now, taken some curious means of fulfillment. It could be that a title such as the one I have chosen might be the tactful approach to a dissenter's suppressed desire for Holy Orders.

But I have maintained the suspense as long as I possibly could, stringing it out until even a few laymen may now be hoping that there is something to it. And I have to confess that the rumor is highly exaggerated. There's *nothing* to it! And I might as well tell you why. It's just this: I don't want Holy Orders because I already have them. I don't need to become a priest because I already am one!

Now, I suspect that I'm going to have a thrash around with words for a moment before I shall be in the clear and on my way. For, in my short experience of the Church, other words have borne the heft of usage to describe the spiritual leadership of a flock. "Minister", for example, comes first, and has always implied to me the task of a tender, anxious nurse or physician. To "minister unto" a man suggests the care of someone feeble, undernourished and bewildered. It will always be the work of a compassionate man.

"Pastor" is better, perhaps. That means "Shepherd". "The sheep know the shepherd's voice and they follow him", says the dear old verse of the gospel. How many of us have reason to bless God that it is so! Surrounded by far more impressive preachers, vigorous organizers, gifted

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community leaders, most of us have held first place in our people's hearts for no other reason but that we are *their* pastor. "Other shepherds there are, but the sheep do not know their voice, and will not follow them". So the pastoral relation is a richly rewarding one. It humbles a man because it is a pure gift of grace, undeserved and unconditional. But I am sorry to say that the pastor, in his role as the "parson" or "*the parson*" of the community may very easily be persuaded to strut a bit, to preen himself a trifle in this august position. To be continually called upon to "say a few words" in public, to be invited to "bring greetings", to make addresses like this one, to "open with prayer" at civic banquets, and to "close with a benediction" at various functions—all these courtesies attend the "pastor" and "parson", and persuade him if they can that he *is* somebody.

It takes a lot of patient understanding of ingrained social custom, a lot of appreciation of the ways of chairmen of program committees, and sometimes a rather wry sense of humor if a man in the Christian ministry is to remember the scriptural admonition, "not to think better of himself than he ought."

My own beloved Bangor Seminary calls itself, "The School of the Prophets". I suspect that a good many rival institutions wish they had thought of that motto first! For the prophetic role has a very great appeal to the liberal ministry. Whatever titles others may give us, most ministers would be secretly flattered if they could merit the title "prophet". To look out upon the social, political or economic scene, then to make stringent comments from the pulpit under the general heading: "Thus saith the Lord"—ah, that would be a striking, an arresting technique, indeed.

But more preachers have come to grief in the prophet's role than in any other. I have a number of heart-breaking letters from young ministers who have tried this way and come out with the conviction that the gospels are not "relevant" to the life of their people. That's a word they learned in college or seminary, and it lives on to bedevil them. Poor lads, *they know* just how relevant the gospel is! And the trouble with knowing is that you preach like the Pharisees and scribes who, as Jesus said, "Bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders but they themselves will not move them with their finger". And I struggle to say clearly to these boys, "Let the relevancy of the gospel take care of itself; that's not the burden of the preacher, but of the hearer. You don't *make* the Word of God relevant; it *is*, and the man who hears it honestly preached will draw from it such applications through the Holy Spirit working in him such as you, with all your ingenuity, will never even guess!"

No, I'm not a prophet. I don't even want to be. Tradition has it that all the prophets were stoned, for one thing. And, as I think Mark Twain said, "No wonder." They drew such strict relevance to the Word of God that it came to pass that they soon ceased to communicate anything at all! Please don't think that I am being wilfully frivolous at this point. In the night watches when I cannot sleep, and in seasons of prayer in the empty church, I plead for the fortitude to endure all pains if need be for Christ. Only God knows which of us would make a martyr if faced alone with some cruel choice. What I want to say is this: If I were to be tortured and put to death, I would want to be sure it was because I was Christ's man, not just a bitter zealot, a loveless critic.

As long as I am human, I cannot trust myself to be a prophet. It is too easy to be one for its own sake—to fall into some pit and crawl out a prophet of anti-Christ, like Hitler. It is so much easier to generate heat than light. If the stones are to be plucked up against me, I want to stand in the company of Stephen, that's all. And so do you!

All honor to the holy prophets! They were the conscience of theocratic Israel. Their message must often be upon our lips, but not their method. It is when we imitate that we are like to go astray. For we are differently oriented. We have something they did not have—"a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God . . . For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning". And Paul has this to add concerning our method: "Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need".

So, as the years have followed one another, I have come to think of myself as a priest and of my brothers in the service of Christ's church as priests. Whether we wear a distinctive uniform or a business suit is of no import. For we are parish priests—secular priests, if you like. Among us there should be no rank, no hierarchy. There is but one high priest, even Christ our Lord. Moreover, we are sinners, and stand among those for whom Christ died. As such, we need the earnest prayers of our people. More than once, as I have stood before my flock to offer what we call "the pastoral prayer" I have wished with all my heart that some layman would stand up in his place and call out, "Hold on, my friend, you have prayed for us long enough; now is the time when I want to pray for *you!*"

NOW, AS A PARISH PRIEST, I must be governed by certain priorities. And it seems to me that they are saving priorities —that if I observe them faithfully I will be helped to slough off some of the sins that beset us of the clergy so easily. For the life-work of a priest is to mediate God in Christ to men. And he will remember, with genuine humility, that God is by no means dependent upon him. He himself is an instrument of the Divine Initiative. Unless the Lord build the house, his hands will labor in vain who thinks to build it. The Holy Spirit of God has worked hitherto, and so the priest works. He is not the indispensable man—only Jesus has occupied that position in history. But he is, none the less, a "man of God's own choosing", under orders issued in his name and delivered to him personally through the profound mystery of the Spirit. Beside this wonder the mechanics of apostolic succession looks as pale as an undernourished child.

A priest takes things in his hand and makes them live. There is something in the doctrine of transubstantiation after all: Prayer, for example. What holier word can we take upon our lips than the Names of God—"Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting King, the Prince of Peace"? All about, you will hear other men and women bandy the holy Names thoughtlessly in coarse and insensitive conversation. Where there is no love there is no life. And in prayer it is for the priest to take the name of God on his lips with such love and longing and submissiveness that the seeker in the pews may discover suddenly that One has found him. So, Karshish, the Arab physician in the poem by Browning. You will remember that he has heard of Jesus on his travels, and writes of him to his old teacher of medicine. He ends as I would pray some skeptic in my flock might end:

"The very God! Think, Ahab; dost thou think?

So the All-Great were the All-Loving, too—

So, through the thunder comes a human voice

Saying, 'O heart I made, a heart beats here!

Face, my hands fashioned, see it in myself.

Thou hast no power, nor mayest conceive of mind,

But love I gave thee, with myself to love,

And thou must love me who have died for thee.' "

The parish priest must hold up his flock, the weak and poor and needy ones, daily, one by one, naming them tenderly before God. Not presuming to instruct the Lord God what he should do for them, but simply presenting them before the altar of Divine Sacrifice and infinite Mercy. And on Sundays, when the time comes for him to offer prayer on behalf of all present, the priest must remember the Cross and him who died on it. Our tradition might not look kindly upon him if he knelt at the foot of the Cross with his back to his people as he prays for them. But such will be the attitude of his heart if not his body. You remember the preacher of long ago whom the papers reported as having "uttered the most eloquent prayer ever addressed to a Boston audience". Well, we need to be saved, we preachers, from such posturing as we face our people in prayer. And it will help to save us if we remember that we are priests —that we are entering the Holy of Holies on behalf of our people. And it is a fearful thing for mere man to be so delegated, so trusted—a fearful and moving thing. If we come not out of such experiences, spent, depleted, in some wise trembling with the knowledge of God's great judgment through the Cross, or our own great love and need for Him, we have not been in the presence of God—only in the presence of men.

And let me say this: Contrary to common opinion among us, it is not the true priest who prays smoothly, competently, by rote and in measured cadences. Rather it is he who may well stumble over words, halt perhaps with no speech at all, fail all the demands of topical relevance or literary form, because there are tears in his eyes and a lump in his throat! It was even Simon Peter, that day in the boat when the nets were breaking, who fell on his knees and cried out, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord". And it was to Peter the word came, "Fear not, henceforth you will be catching men". Neither a long nor an eloquent prayer need distinguish the mediation of the wonderful grace of God in Christ.

The parish priest will also mediate God to men in his sermon. If he remembers this he will be saved from vainglory in the pulpit. He will deliver no book report, save that on the Holy Book. Ours is a revealed religion in the sense that it is concerned with things that God has said and done. We need to remind ourselves often that the Bible is not the record of man's search for God, but the record of God's search for man—a very real difference. And the Parish priest is entrusted with this Word. His duty is to wrestle with it as he finds it. Above all, he must not belittle it, whether by clever rationalization or worldly apology.

The word of God may well be hard to comprehend. Somebody remarked to Mark Twain that the Bible bothered him because there was so much of it he couldn't understand. "It isn't the parts I don't understand that bothers *me*", came the answer, "it's the parts I do understand". And that's as it should be! This was no man-made faith. These are the incredible words and acts of the Eternal. Let the priest face the fact, frankly, before his people.

Again, one of the saddest efforts of the young and liberal preacher is very often that he feels he must "make the gospel relevant" for our times. For the gospel's relevancy is not made by men. The priest's responsibility is to preach it as he finds it. He has the mighty act of God to proclaim, not to argue. There is a certain "Given" from which he must not depart—God's great affirmations. All preaching that dwells on the note of rejection of any part of God's Word is vainglory, a betrayal of trust and a waste of time and words. The best advice for insecure preachers is this:

Find in the Bible that which you can proclaim with your whole heart; cling to that; say it if need be again and again. "Put first the kingdom of God, and all else will be added unto you."

If a man confesses himself a priest he is set free from a certain amount of hampering self-consciousness. He can find ways of saying, "Here is what our religion says. I didn't invent it, I found it ready and waiting for me. I don't altogether understand it, and what I do understand embarrasses me because I have thus far failed to observe it in my life. But maybe *you* have, too. Let's look at it again together, for it's the way of salvation, the kingdom way". For the priest himself is subject to the Word. He, too, must read and think and obey—whether he really wants to or not. He is not in the pulpit to recommend himself as a clever or entertaining performer, but to exalt the one true God and, as the Book says, "To preach Christ, and him crucified." If the priest does not mediate this crowning wonder to men, none other *will!*

Acceptance of the role of the priesthood lifts many a burden of disappointment from a man's shoulders. Men may not espouse the programs you promote, may not execute your recommended repairs, or praise your sermons. But if you preach the gospel of Jesus Christ with a very great love for them in your heart, they will come to hear you. Most of our troubles come from trying to put ourselves in the place of God, our message in place of his message, our own lordship in place of the Savior's. As you know, this is the Primal Curse, the Fall of Man, and Satan sees to it that we pastors inherit our full share of it! I find I am helped by my acceptance of the priesthood. It reminds me more forcibly than anything else that I am not my own man—and whose man I am.

Finally, I want to say that the parish priest mediates the grace of God in Christ in the sacraments—the holy mysteries of our faith. Once I was skeptical of the value of these. I thought Christian Baptism was only a formal gesture of initiation, that Holy Communion was only a memorial exercise. It is so easy to explain mysteries away as *only* this, or *only* that. If we cannot understand a thing we think it cannot merit Reality. If we can't sanctify a life we think God can't either; if we are helpless to regenerate, for all our piety, we think God is equally helpless. This is the time for the beating of the breast, my brothers!

But the older I get the more convinced I am that the outward sign and symbol conveys an inward miracle of grace through faith, that Christ takes the child in his arms and seals him for his own, that he lays his hand upon the grown man or woman in the moment of cleansing—that he is at the Holy Table again sharing his very life and the benefits of his sacrifice among us.

None but the parish priest knows this, or can know it with such utter humility. He takes the simple things that God has rendered unspeakably in his hands—clear water, our daily bread, the cup of life poured out for many—and shares them among the people he loves best in the whole world, the flock Christ has entrusted to him. In one, startling, revealing moment is wrapped up the *majesty* of God, and *his* own unworthiness.

If it weren't for the sacraments, a minister might think more highly of himself than he ought to do. But, in one moment, all things fall into their proper place. Down goes that brilliant series of sermons you preached in Lent. Only Christ saves! Gone are all those impassioned prayers when you never were able to forget your human audience. Only Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life, can intercede with the Father. Gone is the "successful church," the bustling program, the stated committee meetings. And the *Savior* at your elbow repeats the eternal judgment,

"Wherever two or three are met in my name, there am I in the midst of them".

Maybe we Protestants are a bit mixed up in this matter. We have prated long of the "priesthood of all true believers", yet have repudiated the figure of the priest as if it stood for all that is perfunctory, carnal and dictatorial. But we have not escaped raising our share of church leaders, no matter what we call them, who are men of stained hands and unclean lips.

It would help both laymen and ministers immeasurably to conquer the internal sins of the Church, if they understood and accepted their common priesthood. For we are seated about our Lord's Table together. And even as we take the Holy Life and the Cup of Sorrow in our hands we hear him say that the betrayer is among us. And we all have to ask with troubled hearts, "Lord, is it I?" Yet, Christ made priests and apostles out of such as we are!

Preachers and people, remember that! We have but one High Priest; Christ Jesus is his name. But the man who stands before you acknowledging his priesthood under him must needs be both quietly brave and desperately humble—brave because it is no small matter to go into the presence with lonely responsibility, and humble because the only abiding work he will ever do will not be his at all, but that of the One who sent him.

FALL ASTERS

THE ASTERS, pale as my weakness,
And therefore companion, reveal
Peace to the road. Walking, I hail
Them, the little blue friars,
Whose garments are meekness,
Whose scriptures start my tears.

In woods where mighty autumn turns
Blazon and maple, and air burns
With vast and clamorous events;
They tonsure blue yet stem down gray
Like a man's work or his old sin,
And so are most like mercy in

Demeanor. Such congregations pray
My need and cry as I would
Cry my adorations if I could.
Their parable is solace gnarled
With grief. Their word is penitence.
Their amen is the kneeling world.

—ARNOLD KENSETH

"The advance of mass media does not really alter any basic problem of our common life."

MASS MEDIA, THE GOSPEL AND THE CHURCH

by HARLAND G. LEWIS*

DO THE MASS MEDIA of communication influence us as much as its users hope? Or are these new instruments of even more pervasive significance than we know? Is their impact basic or merely superficial, as we are beset, eye, ear, emotion and reason, with these newly intensive pressures?

A flood of comment and analysis, both scholarly and popular, is available to us in this whole matter. Rosenberg's "Mass Culture" for example, cuts through media and message with a sharp and sardonic knife, exposing a cross section. Vance Packard's "The Hidden Persuaders" is still highly provocative, as is Whyte's "The Organization Man". There are other commentaries, and novels, too, which work this new vein of material.

Well, what should the Church man and Christian think of all this? What about these new pressures and factors in our culture? Or are they new at all? Should he be cynical, grateful, or merely passive?

And what about the minister? How shall he see it? He need only look about him; listen to radio, watch TV, scan the magazine racks in the local drug store, check over the lists of books chosen by the clubs for mass distribution (including clubs which will choose his own professional reading for him), to begin to sense the tensions and pressures, explicit and implicit, which shape the life, thought, and values of his people. And himself.

Some thoughtful people feel that the pervasive and inescapable invasion of our minds and privacy by mass media adds a whole new and demonic dimension to our culture. We are objects to the user of mass media and he wants to influence us. "The Hidden Persuaders" is an alternately acid and gay report of how motivational research is digging into the deep springs of action in us to find the triggers which when touched, will make us buy a new car, new clothing (for reasons often far removed from a simple need for transportation or warmth), breakfast cereal, or, indeed, anything. These psychological studies discover the emotional and irrational basis of much of our buying, and the consumer is exploited (or rather seduced). Everything from early toilet-training habits to lust for success and fear of failure becomes action-triggers for these hidden persuaders and their aim is sure and their activity relentless. The approach now of a subliminal invasion of the subconsciousness by sound or sight pitched just below the threshold of conscious recognition, but just high enough to get into the decision making centers, is a new technique, opening new doors to the "engineers of consent." While we may be sold soap now, our vote may be determined next, and after that, what?

For many people this is all a fearsome prospect. Christians and others are saying that this is an invasion of the privacy of the mind and of the individual which makes him the object, the means, to another man's ends. Slavery was physical bondage. This is bondage of the intellect and the will, the more insidious because so pleasant and so painless.

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If an industry and its customers, in however well-intentioned a manner, have mobilized the skills and insights of modern depth psychology to manipulate people to their own ends, what kind of idea of man can they have? Or have they even thought about it? If they protest that their ends are good, that increasing buying, for example, and thus feeding the vast production needs of our economy of abundance is essential, does this touch the issue? For whether for soap, for votes, or for alluring false gods, man is being used. Christians will recognize at once that their view of man is being violated.

But what can be done about it? In England where the broadcasting and TV facilities are state-owned, there can be control. But even there, this control is good only because the government is beneficent, some will say. One cannot imagine Hitler or Stalin resisting the uses of the most advanced techniques in persuading people. Even now the campaigns of Republicans and Democrats in this country are operated by advertising agencies. How far from the open debates of Lincoln and Douglas we are. But nevertheless in England there is still recognized the principle of democratic control, through government, of the massive factors of communication in common life.

What about our country? Where does the responsibility lie? With the writer, the actor, the producer, the sponsor, the station? There is some measure of recognition of public responsibility in the Federal Communication Commission regulations regarding granting of licenses and operating rights. Recent congressional investigations have unveiled sordid corruption in these areas. But even what control we do have is largely of the profit-making aspect of communication, it does not touch the real issue of mass media as a culture determining force at all. Is the man who pays the bills finally responsible? Perhaps, but he pays the bills in order to sell something, not for the public welfare. The canons of good taste are apt to be stretched as far towards the limits as possible, and every research technique will be bent to locate the most inclusive common denominator. Some will say the listener or viewer is ultimately responsible for he has only to turn off his set. This is the controlling act, they say. But how decisive can a man be whose whole taste and standards are subtly and continuously cheapened and debauched? It is like being an alcoholic in a liquor store. How responsible can he really be?

Some will argue for direct attack through agencies such as the Roman Catholic Legion of Decency, through pressure on legislators, through direct action. Others will say that forces like the Church and educational institutions should use mass media more themselves, pouring more skill and money into them in an effort to restore a balance or make it a positive good. We should use it more and better.

This latter comment raises at once the question as to whether this is a morally neutral instrument which reflects only the will of the user. After all, in the last analysis, you have only electronic equipment and paper and printing presses. These things have no moral significance. The use really determines the moral impact. Hence the suggestion of efforts to control, and to capture, this instrument. Use it for good ends. Is it like the matter of atomic power, which can either heat and light cities and empower factories, or roast people and destroy cities?

And there is good reason for seeing this as only one more revolution in society and culture. The industrial revolution radically altered social and economic and political patterns, and set up tensions and strains which are still with us. The power released by atomic fission has extended man's muscles into hitherto unknown realms. So now radio and TV extend man's persuasive powers over any former instrumentality, though printing began this whole trend. But all this is nothing

different in kind from the past, only in extent.

Those who hold the Judeo-Christian view of man will not be surprised by this new exploitation and distortion of man. The serpent beguiled Eve in the garden with words: the powers of evil approached the first man and the first woman through the powers of speech. Biblically oriented thinkers will see in mass media only a more cunning and pervasive exploitation of man's vulnerability, not anything different in kind at all. Man is prone to pride, to idolatry, to selfishness, and here is the serpent still using words and subtle appeals. "You shall be as gods. You shall never die." "Buy a Cadillac and people will know you are a success." "Retire to Florida and live carefree and longer."

So the Biblical doctrine of man as fallen by the very fact of his creation and his selfness, recognizes man's vulnerability and frailty. All that mass media can do with and to man is no surprise at all. Here is a realistic basis of appraisal, at least, of this new phenomena in our common life.

But the Christian further sees that this freedom which is the very essence of man's creaturehood and his selfhood and which is an element in man's fall, is a responsible freedom. "Choose you this day whom ye shall serve," is God's command. He assumes we can answer. He created us so we can answer. And thus the Biblical Christian is not shocked into cynical inaction by what mass media brings to the modern scene. There is room in his view of man for this. It is not a new element at all. For there is a core of responsibility, of residual integrity, in man in which he can respond to something deeper than these new appeals to his pride, his selfishness, his animal nature.

And will the Christian Churchman then not bend every effort to articulate and teach the Christian doctrine of man so that men may know who they are and what they can do? The Church, recognizing the skilful corruption of man, the demeaning of his nature by mass media, and seeing his manipulation by hidden persuaders will proclaim the view of man as not a means, but an end. He is not important primarily because of what he owns, or does, or buys, but because Christ died for him. He is free, not merely to make wrong choices, but to make right ones, as well. In the context of the Incarnation, the Biblical Christian will see both the limitations and the possibilities of man, and in the cross he will see the ultimate standard of measuring "gain or loss," and man's ultimate deliverance from himself.

Churchmen will want to ask themselves what mass media does to people, what substitutes for God it offers and makes subtly attractive. From within the Christian context they will know, of course, that mass media offers cheap substitutes for God, the Lord of history. Mass media offers an instrument through which is magnified and fed more cunningly all heresies of idolatrous pride to which man has always been prone.

THE PROBLEM OF mass media and the mission of the Church becomes more specific when one considers the use the Church itself makes of it through its agencies of education and information. Here the average religious program lacks anything like the emotional impact and incisive penetration of life which is characteristic of some of the better dramatic shows. Religious shows are often moralistic, stereotyped, and didactic. When the Church uses mass media it often treats religion as a commodity, to be sold in competition with everything else. Generally people consider the Church to be sincere and well-meaning in its views and motives, but hardly realistic or important. The net result is too often a trivialized form of religion which is heard or seen in competition with other things, and which does not point to the church itself. It offers indeed a kind of "wholesale" outlet where one gets religion "cheaper

and easier" than at the local "retail" outlet. The Gospel out of its context is distorted. The judgment of the Gospel over man and society is cut down until it becomes only one more competing and often badly presented factor in the clamor for our time, our money, our patronage.

Many of the genuine dramatic shows come nearer to an authentic portrayal of life and a deep understanding of man's true nature than most religious programs, particularly those which rely on the standard evangelistic approach with the language of the "insider." Such stereotyped programs will not appeal to the mass of people only loosely in the church, or those carelessly or deliberately outside it.

But many people who do not know the language of redemption find themselves mirrored in authentic drama, as in poetry and true literature, and revealed to themselves more honestly than in most sermons or moralistic skits. It is to this man perhaps newly aware of himself and his predicament and his relationships, that the Gospel can often speak afresh. But the man smothered in a conforming world of ideas, patterns, objectives, values, never has a chance to know himself. And often the religion that makes its way to him through mass media is stereotyped and artificial and cannot break into his life powerfully.

These people who read, listen, and watch are apt to be the very people who are in our Churches Sunday after Sunday, an astoundingly large proportion of them. Do they bring this artificially created world of mass media into the church and thus force the church to conform to it? Here the tendency of the church to be a club in which to meet one's own kind and to call the resulting reassurance "security" and "fellowship" is at its peak. Here the temptations to be what you are expected to be are overwhelming. Can the Church stand over and against this new threat to man's integrity and soul? If the church itself is primarily seen as a bulwark to American democracy or of economic free enterprise primarily, then it accepts its view of man from these perspectives. It must then derive its vitality from these sources also. It has no power within it, or any stance over society, at all. It is an object and not a subject.

The advance of mass media does not really alter any basic problem of our common life. Man's primary and determinative relationship is with God, and is known through Christ. Alterations in man's circumstances are not ultimate, even the present possibility that we can destroy humanity and this planet. Even this is only an event in God's history, though the end of ours. Mass media corrupts man's mind and will but in no new way.

So is it not true that this means that the Church's task is not different basically than it ever has been? If there is anything new it is the reinforced need for clear understanding of man's nature and destiny in Biblical terms.

The search for the answer to the impact of mass media in our time then does not lie primarily in the realm of increased use of this means, more skill and more money, by the churches and other enlightened groups. Or even primarily in the area of control of mass media. This new instrument, however controlled or used, is capable of only a partial or limited portrayal of the Gospel. It can never supplant face to face witness and action. It must always be only a supplement to the life of the church. That man is corrupted by today's mass media who does not know who he is, and it is the unrelenting witness to man in Christ that is the church's primary task, now and always. With this Gospel she must begin to consider her times and its forces and pressures. In the maelstrom of changing words and multiplying agencies of communication, Christ, the Word made flesh, is the only constant. This stands over mass media, and the Christian who stands with Christ, does also.

"How are boys and girls, men and women called into Church vocations?"

THE CALL TO CHURCH VOCATIONS

by WESLEY C. EWERT*

ONE DAY, a hundred or so years ago, a young man sat in the gallery of the British House of Commons and listened to the majestic eloquence of John Bright. He went back home with the resolve in his heart that he was going to be a lawyer. The day before he was going to sign the articles that would admit him as a member of the bar, he was walking through his native city, when he came face to face with a former Sunday School teacher. He said, "I am to sign the articles in the law office tomorrow." And his old teacher said to him, "Law is a great profession and honorable," but with that his face clouded, and he continued, "but Henry, I have always hoped that you would be a minister in the Church." The young man went home, and there in solitude he heard the call ringing in his soul—the call to the ministry, and it was not long after, when Henry Jowett gave himself to the fulfilling of this call.

How are boys and girls, men and women, called into church vocation? In the Old and the New Testaments there are recorded many stories of calls to religious vocation. Isaiah went into the temple in an hour of shattering grief and great need, and *there* he saw the Lord—and God claimed him and sent him out on the high road of life. Moses was faced with his conscience. He had been trained for leadership in a king's court. He subsequently ran away from people in need. Over the years he heard the crack of the whip and sensed the pain of his fellows as they were goaded in their canal building, and brick making. Finally the bush burned with transcendent glory, and he went back to fulfill his calling. "Go down Moses—let my people go." Jeremiah saw his nation crumbling before his eyes, and being sensitive to right and wrong, he experienced a genuine tug-of-war within himself. He shrank from being a spokesman for God, pleading his youth, his inexperience. But the divine compulsion was all 'round about him, and he broke out, "If I say I will not make mention of him or speak anymore his name then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary of forebearing, and I cannot contain." The response of the person was given to a challenging *need*. Jesus, after the desert experience, came preaching the Kingdom of God—the kingdom of right relations between man and God. Paul was way-laid by a series of arresting experiences—Stephen going to his death unafraid—a light on the road and a voice that would not be silenced. He was then, as it were, catapulted across the face of the earth because he knew himself to be a slave—a slave of Him who alone had a message and the authority to do for mankind what mankind could not do for itself. "Necessity is laid upon me. Yea, woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." And Peter—think of Peter! He was a fisherman, and being a fisherman was an honorable calling. But one day a man spoke to him with a compulsion in his voice, "Come follow me, I will make you a fisher of men."

The Biblical record is clear: There was a divine constraint laid upon men, and they could not do otherwise than speak and follow as conscience directed.

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When John Wesley returned to England from Georgia, he returned a broken and disillusioned man. But one of his friends took him in hand and on a Sunday afternoon they went to St. Paul's Cathedral, where, as they entered, the choir was singing, "O Israel, trust in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plentious redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins." In the evening of that day he says, "I went very unwillingly to a society in Alders gate street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. . . . I felt my heart strangely warmed." And not only warmed, but compelled it was, as he went out and set all England afire with zeal for doing justly and loving mercy.

Or consider the life of another man, a very modern man. He was educated, as was Henry Jowett, for the practice of law —and he was teaching law in our capital city at George Washington University. Christianity was not at the center of his concerns. But one day a lecture was being given in St. John's church, and Professor Pike happened to be there to hear it. And from that day forward, the way ahead was into the Christian ministry, to the Deanship of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, and now to the Bishopric of the state of California. The call came through. It was articulated.

I

Today we face our boys and girls, and ofttimes mature men and women, and we wonder who is "called" to enter the ranks as ministers, religious educators and missionaries. A splendid teacher and preacher said not long ago, "It is clear to me that God's call to a vocation is articulated, like the divine message in preaching, on human lips. Hence it is the church's responsibility not to urge every good and devoted young man into the ministry, for instance, but to urge every good and devoted young man to approach his life occupation in a religious spirit, and to apprise every good and devoted young man of the fact that if he loves people and loves ideas with an equal passion for each, God very probably wants him in the ministry."

Have we, mothers and fathers, teachers and preachers been articulate, urgently articulate about the tasks needing to be done, so that boys and girls ready for a "call,' have a call presented to them? Do we ourselves comprehend the need, and is our motivation such that the tone is clear and certain? How important is the parish ministry? Would your community be as good without your voice as with it? What is there about the Gospel according to you and me that would issue in a call to a modern Jeremiah, and awaken conscience in a modern Moses? Is what we are about the most important thing in the world (as it was for Paul of Tarsus) or do we wait and wonder, thinking that deliverance may be vouchsafed more fully in some future revelation or sign of Almighty God? Is our Gospel the answer to man's need? What is the "Word of God" in a time of hydrogen bombs, intercontinental missiles and taut nerves?

II

The voice of the concerned being clear in the midst of confusion, certain results usually come to pass. First, the hearers realize their own involvement in man's tragedy. Slavery in Egypt is my slavery. A people of unclean lips are my people. Sickness, tragedy, foreboding; all these are our common lot. The call to church vocation does not absolve a person from involvement in man's need—it places him right in the very center of it. Our young people, all those who may be disposed to hear a call to church vocation, should not be led to imagine that the Christian Ministry is a life of ease and physical security. These things may be the lot of a few, but if they are ends sought after, then the conception of the ministry is ill-conceived. Joseph Parker, who stands near us in time, once said to some young men who

looked upon the ministry as a profession leading to ease and comfort, "If any young men are coming into the ministry as a profession (looking to ease and comfort), God hinder them, and starve them; build up a great granite wall right in the face of them, and starve them until they begin to repent and pray." There is so much need and tragedy in every community, that no one, certainly not the minister, can be at ease in Zion.

III

Who is able to respond to the calling that lays unending demands upon the ministry. Boys and girls, men and women will be reluctant to hear a "call" to church vocation. This reluctance may stem from fullorbed honesty. Moses complained of stammering speech; Jeremiah thought himself too young. But remember what God did with those lives after they were put at his disposal? We today do not walk in the dark with respect to such innate abilities with which we have been endowed. Our love of people may readily be complemented by a love of ideas. The many vocational tests available can help discern our "idea" capacities. Carl Hansen, wise counselor and friend of youth said recently, "I would add the idea that careful identifying of one's talents and the measuring of one's abilities is also a God-given way of discovering one's fitness for certain kinds of service in His Kingdom." And when these talents are dedicated and given whole-heartedly in the service of the Lord and Life, they can then be used in the fullest meaning, in a *call* to Christian vocation. Isaiah was a talented sensitive young man—but the world and we know this only because the day came when his response was, "Here am I, send me." It is for all of us to remember, particularily those of us who carry responsibility for the recruitment of young people for Church vocations, that we are servants of the word of God. It is for this, and by this, that we are captivated and taken captive. P. T. Forsyth said trenchantly in 1907, "You hear it said with a great air of religious common sense, that it is the man the modern age demands in the pulpit, and not his doctrine. It is the man who counts and not his creed. But this is one of those shallow and plausible half truths which have the success that always follows when the easy, obvious underpart is blandly offered for the arduous whole. No man has any right in the pulpit in virtue of his personality or manhood in itself, but only in virtue of the sacramental value of his personality for his message. We have no business to worship the elements, which means, in this case, to idolize the preacher . . . To be ready to accept any kind of message from a magnetic man is to lose the Gospel to mere impressionism. It is to sacrifice the moral in religion to the aesthetic. And it is fatal to the authority either of the pulpit or the Gospel. The church does not live by its preachers, but by its Word."

Our Creator asks that we use that which has been given to us; our love of people, our love of ideas baptized by the gift of the love through Him, who is able to take what we have and do exceedingly abundantly with it even above what we dare ask or think.

THE MINISTER AND THE DENOMINATION

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In view of the recent decision of our denomination to raise $7,500,000 in the interests of higher education, the following article is especially timely.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

by GEORGE E. BURTON*

WINFRED GARRISON, in his *The March of Faith,* pays something of a compliment to Congregationalism. He makes the observation that we have been less self-conscious as a denomination than any other major communion. While we have provided leadership in a number of fields we have not concerned ourselves with denominational credit or glory. On Forefather's Day we may extol our achievements, especially in missions, social action, and higher education. The glory has been dimmed, however, because in present day concern we are among the least.

This is especially mystifying in terms of higher education. We have founded many colleges, started more than our share of leading seminaries, done great work through the A.M.A. colleges, and have a constituency that is second to none in its level of education. By tradition and training one would think that higher education would be a major field of Congregational Christian endeavor, especially since it is a critical area of tremendous importance in shaping the content and direction of our culture. The facts seem to be otherwise.

Our church colleges under the A.M.A. get most of their support from endowments, not current giving. Our church related colleges cut the umbilical cord of denominational control many years ago. We support a mere two hundred campus ministries; most of our young people matriculate at non-church colleges; student participation in the United Student Fellowship is numerically small.

What are the reasons for this? Among them we can mention the following:

1. Congregational colleges and seminaries have always been autonomous. This will be defended with good reasons, but it does undermine any direct sense of responsibility for them.

2. The purposes of higher education have been secularized. As David J. Pittman of the University of Rochester has said, "The secular trend became victorious (in the 19th and early 20th centuries), at least in academic circles, to be replaced by the new trinity of scientific method, statistics, and research". This has not pained us. We send our own children to colleges that are competent in these respects. Fundamentalists and Roman Catholics have reacted to this secularization. We have felt no conflict. For the liberal minded Protestant certain types of scientific, humanitarian and philosophic secularism are not in conflict but allies of Christian faith. If true, this should not lead to present-day indifference.

3. We have assumed that the Protestant spirit is dominant in our culture and that we did not need to insure the presence of a competent Christian witness on the cam-

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puses of this country. Church and home training, before and after college, would win the day.

4. Denominational tradition and pride do not count for much with most of us. As long as somebody, (Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Y.M.-W.C.A.) is doing student work why should we provide a ministry, especially since many of our students don't participate even when a local U.S.F. is organized?

5. No proof can be given of the effectiveness of the church-related college or student religious programs in terms of Christian nurture. Personal testimony can be obtained but no objective studies have been made of academic or co-curricular religious programs and activities.

6. We recognize the great need for education through the American Board schools overseas, but how can private church colleges hope to compete with tax-supported state institutions in this country?

These are some of the reasons why we have not been concerned. However, our absenteeism from higher education has impoverished the churches, the universities, and the students.

Some teachers have gone so far as to charge that non-Christian professors and writers have introduced anti-religious points of view under the guise of neutrality and objectivity. In any case, the burden of proof for the relevance of the Christian faith to learning and culture lies with us. We should assume that burden (admittedly a very heavy one) at the several levels of higher education. There is no one else.

Specifically, what are some of the targets we need to shoot for, and why do we need money to reach them?

A. Student Work and Campus Ministry

Anyone familiar with student life will sense a hunger that is not satisfied with a religiously neutral curriculum or solely superficial activities. This hunger is not met in the student foundation programs supported by the fundamentalist, conservative, or pietistic groups. Student Y's are doing excellent work in some places but they do not have the finances or the staff to reach the majority of searching students. Many campuses are untouched by any ministry to students. We should strengthen the excellent work that is being done and expand it.

It is important that we recruit, train and support a campus ministry. This takes money. We should also spend time and money on research into what types of programs are most effective in different types of situations. It is not enough to list the number of participants and estimate percentages. These quantitative measurements may persuade a Community Chest agency but they are misleading in terms of Christian nurture. There is good reason to believe that a campus and student centered approach is superior in effectiveness to an operation carried on from a local church. Many professionals in the field are convinced that small groups centered around study, worship and work are more fruitful than mass activities and impressive numbers. The socially retiring but academically and emotionally solid student needs to be reached. How can this be done? These are just a few of the questions that need answers. It is estimated that between 1965-70 one-half of the high school graduates will be going on to some kind of advanced training. Will we be prepared to meet these people where they are or will opportunity pass us by?

Even with an empirically tested program and competent leadership, a proper job cannot be done without adequate facilities. Every pastor and administrator is perfectly aware of this fact. The campus minister does not have an adult congregation that can raise money for buildings. The money can come only from the churches.

B. Graduate-Faculty and Curriculum

Higher education is obviously not limited to students. In forty-four colleges reporting there are 2053 CC and E&R faculty members, not to mention administrative personnel. At present we do not have the budget or staff to correspond with this group! These faculty and administrative workers are a tremendous potential in terms of Christian witness within higher education. The Danforth and Hazen Foundations, among others, have done very good work with college teachers in helping them relate their particular disciplines to their faith but much more needs to be done, quantitatively and qualitatively. Prentiss Pemberton has listed some of the goals we need to work toward ("Reports and Notices", THE CHRISTIAN SCHOLAR, Volume VI, No. 2, June 1957):

> To encourage inter-disciplinary communication between faculty representing a wide range of fields, especially in General Seminars.
>
> To encourage communication between leaders with religious interests and outstanding competence in a special discipline and college teachers in that discipline.
>
> To examine thoroughly and critically basic meanings and problems of the Christian world view, especially as those meanings and problems bear upon higher education.
>
> To search out ultimate spiritual values and perspectives which belong intrinsically in every sound classroom experience.
>
> To focus the above objectives into a critical evaluation of current religious philosophies of higher education.
>
> To revitalize the teacher's appreciation for his vocational opportunities in creative teaching, scholarship, and research.

Curriculum-wise, the traditional technique of having a department for Bible and Ethics has tended to "departmentalize religion". Some promising developments are underway in this area. One university, known by the author, hopes to find at least one man for each department who is competent in a related theological field as well as his own discipline. They have been successful in the fields of philosophy, sociology, literature, and history, thus far. In this way it is hoped that the significance of the Judeo-Christian tradition will be brought out in every aspect of academic life. Very few Congregationalists could ask for more. We do not want a church controlled college or a curriculum dominated by courses in specialized aspects of churchmanship. We should be willing to raise up a host of men and women who are able to work in higher education as Christians, competent as amateur theologians and expert in their chosen fields—whether they work at the administrative, teaching or student group work levels.

One of our most responsible and respected pastors recently asked, in effect, "How can we present the higher education fund to our membership in a compelling way?" The Church Building Fund was an obvious need. What is obvious in higher education? It is obvious that we have not provided appropriate means for a theologically adequate witness in higher education. The separation of the philosophy and institutional life of the church from the college and university has been harmful to both. The time for reconciliation is long past due. The collegiate group and others in other areas of advanced training are a critically important segment of our population. It is here that many of the leaders of tomorrow who will make the policy decisions are trained today. It is crucially necessary that they have every opportunity to gain a mature Christian perspective so that the Christian institutions of today and tomorrow will affect the culture.

Here is valuable background for that Thanksgiving sermon

THE MAYFLOWER II SPEAKS TO AMERICA

by **Robert Merrill Bartlett***

From now until Thanksgiving 1958, and for decades thereafter many Americans will visit *Mayflower II* in her Plymouth home. Built in Britain, largely with British gifts, the ship has been presented to Plimoth Plantation as custodian for the American people. The intrepid little voyager is back for her second American Thanksgiving after winter and spring exhibitions in Miami and Washington, D. C. Created to dramatize the Pilgrim story of faith and freedom and to bring together the English speaking people in rededication to these principles, the artistic and symbolic craft has a message for us at Thanksgiving time.

Warwick Charlton, a young English journalist attached to General Montgomery's forces, observed Great Britain and America fighting side by side for a cause in World War II. He wondered how this team work might be preserved after war ended. On a journey from Singapore to England he read for the first time the *Journal* of William Bradford and was deeply impressed by the record of the original *Mayflower*. The words of the Pilgrim leader struck a chord: "May not and ought not the children of these fathers rightly say 'Our fathers were Englishmen which came over this great ocean, and were ready to perish in this wilderness.' " Here was an obvious link between the two countries, the point where friendship could be symbolized and the age-old bonds strengthened. Why not a second *Mayflower* to bolster the ties of goodwill in the midst of post war disillusionment?

Charlton found an ally in John Lowe, his partner in a public relations firm, and in Felix Fenston, a wealthy yachtsman and world traveler, who contributed funds to launch the project. A campaign to raise $300,000 through popular subscription was initiated. British industries were asked to contribute through treasure chests of their products that were to be carried on the ship for exhibit in America. The English group, organized as Project Mayflower, established contact with Plimoth Plantation, Inc. in America and learned of its plans to build a new *Mayflower* as part of its replica of the original Plymouth settlement of the Pilgrims. The Plantation already had working plans for a second *Mayflower* developed for it by William A. Baker, American naval architect and an authority on early ships. It was quickly agreed that the Plantation would make plans available to Project Mayflower and in turn would receive permanent custody of the ship.

Stuart Upjohn of Bricham, Devon, well-known builder of wooden ships, laid the keel in 1955. He used local English oak timbers for the framing, 130 year old Devon cider kegs for the treenails (the wooden pegs that fasten the planking to the frames), and an 80 foot pine tree from Canada for the main mast, one of the largest pieces of timber ever imported. The sails were provided by an old Scottish firm with centuries of experience in weaving flax.

Hundreds of Britishers offered their services as crew members. Captain Alan Villiers, Australia's literary seaman, selected key men who were familiar with square-rigged sailing. The crewmen were lured by the project through love of ships and the sea and belief in this enterprise of goodwill. Most of them worked for a few

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bob a week, three spartan meals a day in the windowless pit called the tiller flat, food being passed from the tiny galley down a steep ladder. Bunks were double-decker style, suspended in cramped, pitch dark cabins, and provided with an austerity, one-inch cotton mattress on a crude steel spring. Having been aboard, I pay tribute to the thirty-three crew and photographers who survived these beds and culinary privations, and marvel even more how the original *Mayflower* crew managed in a more or less identical craft with 102 big and little Pilgrims on board with them.

There has been some unfavorable publicity on the British financing of the project, but I hope the American people will read behind this to the spirit of the British which led them to contribute in this gesture. In spite of the fact that the ship cost much more than first estimated and there was not time to raise the additional money needed, I hope we still have the capacity to appreciate a spiritual enterprise in a time when we are engrossed in building bombs, guided missiles and other incredible devices of destruction. *Mayflower II* grew like Topsy. It could have received more backing from the church people of Great Britain, especially our Congregationalists, if it had been handled more wisely. It started as a $300,000 project, but much more was needed to build, equip and sail the vessel to our shores. However, the ship now has been taken over by the Plantation subject to the debts; and this problem will soon be past history. The main thing for the American people now is to appreciate *Mayflower II* and the effort of our British cousins and help Plimoth Plantation to carry through its plans to completion.

Plimoth Plantation has been working for twelve years to find ways to preserve and transmit the Pilgrim story to posterity. It built the First House and the 1627 House near Plymouth Rock to show the American public how the Pilgrims built and lived. The first Plymouth settlers did not erect log cabins (these came later with the Swedish immigrants), but English style frame cottages. The Plantation is now seeking to raise $1,000,000 to recreate the original Plymouth village on a magnificent 100 acre site two miles south of the Plymouth business center. The Fort-Meetinghouse has been completed and sits on top of the hill above the First Street, where nineteen Pilgrim family homes are being erected. This center of worship and defense, created of sturdy, hand-hewn oak, is the gift of our Congregational churches. We have pledged $25,000 for the project, but at this writing only $7,000 has been contributed. The Fort-Meetinghouse was the first church in New England. It continued to be the Pilgrims' worship center until 1648. The Pilgrim defense against anticipated Indian foes was developed here during meetings for Bible reading and prayer. Moreover, the guns on the deck above the sanctuary were never used against their primitive neighbors. In fact the skillful diplomacy of Bradford for the Pilgrims and Massasoit for the Indians resulted in a firm and friendly alliance between the white and red men.

In addition to the Fort-Meetinghouse and the nineteen Pilgrim cottages on First Street, the Plantation will add a trading post, a grist mill, an Indian village, and Pilgrim museum. Four of the family houses are under construction: Brewster, Bradford, Warren and Howland. Others will be started as soon as sufficient funds are contributed by d e s c e n d a n t s and friends. $1,000,000 is a modest goal for this American heritage shrine. In comparison think of the Battle Ship Wisconsin, which cost us over $100,000,000 a few years ago, now obsolete and in the junk yard. Are we contemporary Americans wise enough to invest in ideals and values that may survive our century of war?

Mayflower II will eventually be placed along the ocean front of the Plantation or in the fresh water pond that is connected with the sea by Eel River. She is the great

attraction. This past summer more than 2,000 visitors a day have walked the decks of the artistic creation of the Devon builders, painted in Lincolnshire brown, decorated with green and blue, with a huge white Mayflower on her stern. The brave little ship has a message for every visitor.

To prepare our minds to receive the *Mayflower II* into our national life let us try to recapture the spirit of the original *Mayflower.* These first independents in Amsterdam and Leyden received their name because they were spied upon, harried and pilloried by the English crown until in desperation they left their church and country to find a place where they could worship as they belived right. Their young leaders, Robinson, Clifton, Brewster and Bradford, were brilliant, creative thinkers of outstanding ability and courage. They and their followers were rebels against a kind of religious totalitarianism. In their haven of Dutch tolerance they found room for their independent ideas. Another university trained youth, Edward Winslow, came at William Brewster's request to help run the Pilgrim Press, which published books that were critical of church and state. They printed the writings of Pastor John Greenwood and the lawyer, Henry Barrowe, that were prohibited in England. Francis Johnson was employed by the English ambassador to buy up these works as they appeared and burn them. But he made the mistake of reading one of the books, and decided to become an Independent. He returned to England to see Greenwood and Barrowe and was thrown into prison. When Greenwood, Barrowe and their Welsh friend, John Penry, were released from prison in 1592 they organized the Southwark Independent Church in London and chose Francis Johnson as their minister. This church now called the Pilgrim Fathers' Memorial Church, was destroyed by bombs in World War II and has recently been rebuilt under the leadership of Dr. Albert D. Belden. John Smyth, a member of this parish, fled to Gainsborough on the Yorkshire border, where he became minister of an Independent church. He became a friend of William Brewster of Scrooby, who founded a secret church in his manor house. Brewster discussed religion with John Smyth, Richard Clifton and John Robinson, padres of nearby Independent parishes, and in turn became the tutor of young William Bradford.

Four of Brewster's friends were executed for the tracts they wrote: John Greenwood, Henry Barrowe, John Penry and John Udell. Efforts were made to have Brewster arrested in Holland and brought home to England for trial, but Dutch friends protected him.

In 1615 the Leyden Colony had grown to about 250 and a combination church and manse was built for scholarly Pastor Robinson who debated theology in Latin, assisted by William Brewster, with the Dutch dominies at the university. William Bradford, more or less self-taught, was a protege of these two scholars. The colony prospered, but the colonists still thought of themselves as pilgrims and seekers. The Spanish threatened war against Holland and they did not wish to risk the chance of renewed persecution if the Spanish should win. They continued to talk of creating a new community of their own, an overseas colony where they could be free to worship and work. Virginia was discussed. Francis Johnson had made a trip to Newfoundland after he was released from prison to seek a haven for his people. He returned to Holland, where he served as minister of some of his flock who were exiles there, still holding his post as minister of the Southwark Church in London. He urged the Independents not to go to British Guiana for fear of the Spaniards, not to Newfoundland or Virginia, where there was little hope of freedom, but to locate somewhere near the Hudson River.

The Pilgrims watched the preparations

of Francis Blackwell, elder in the English church in Amsterdam, who packed 180 pilgrims aboard a sailing ship and set out for Virginia. Blown off course, ill with scurvy, without fresh water, only 50 of his company reached the shores of the new world in 1619. After long efforts to secure financial backing the Leyden Pilgrims set out on their own desperate venture, too late in the season for a safe crossing, with scanty provisions and no capital, with no knowledge of fishing, fur trading or conditions on the new continent. But they possessed hearts stouter than the Devon oak in their chartered square-rigger. As Brewster put it, it was not with them "as with other men, whom small things can discourage, or small discontentments cause to wish themselves at home againe."

The chartered craft was a "sweet ship", engaged long enough in the wine trade to purify her hull from the garbage and filth that characterized seventeenth century vessels. This fact may have checked illnesses on the long and rigorous voyage. The first *Mayflower* crossed the Atlantic in 66 days while *Mayflower II,* taking the southern route, required only 53 days. Though longer, the latter course takes advantage of the prevailing winds and currents. It probably would have been chosen by Captain Jones of the first *Mayflower* had it not been for fear of Spanish pirates.

The original company anchored off the sandy desolation of Provincetown with misgiving. Since they had missed Virginia and were hundreds of miles from any settlement, without authority to settle in this undesirable country, mutiny was whispered. Since "none had the power to command them", why should they not take control into their own hands? At this rumbling a few level heads gathered the able men aboard and presented the Mayflower Compact. They signed as "loyal subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James" to "covenant and combine ourselves into a civil body politic for our better ordering and protection", promising "due submission and obedience to" officers elected and laws passed. The Compact was not a complete constitution, but it remained the basis of their government for ten years. Dr. Samuel E. Morison states, "some will say for 70 years, since all their later government developed out of the Compact."

Contemporary students of the *Mayflower II* need to recapture and reinterpret the spirit of the original *Mayflower.* Otherwise its meaning is barren. The little company who disembarked in 1620 faced the desolation of a bitter winter without roofs, fuel, food, or cash. Sickness, probably some virulent form of influenza, took a terrible toll. Of the 41 men who signed the Compact, 22 died, leaving 19. Of the 40 estimated members of the crew, half died. Of the 34 children, 12 died, leaving 22. Of the 18 married women, 14 died, leaving 4. But this precarious minority held together through faith in God and in their future. All that has been invested in the *Mayflower II* and Plimoth Plantation will be worth it if we Americans of today can recapture comparable courage to hold to a moral purpose when the going is rough, and reveal to our age the resolution which motivated the exile band and preserved their resolution to stay in the New World when their ship started her homeward journey in the early spring. All hands said no to Captain Jones' entreaty for some volunteer to take the place of his cook who had died with the Great Sickness.

The first three years were a battle of the undernourished, impoverished and debt-ridden colony against the raw elements. In May, and June 1623 a long drought aggravated their distress. The gardens withered and the corn dried up. Elder Brewster called for "a solemn day of humiliation". As they prayed clouds appeared and "sweet and gentle showers revived and quickened" the parched land, as the sensitive Bradford wrote, "Behold, another providence of God." A day of Thanksgiving was held July 30, 1623, and the next morning the good ship,

Anne, arrived bringing the wives and children of some Pilgrims, and new recruits to replace losses. The next week the *Little James* entered the harbor. But the new arrivals were "daunted and dismayed" at the pathetic appearance of the settlers who could offer them no better than "a lobster or a piece of fish without bread or anything else but a cup of fair spring water."

In spite of this bad beginning, ill fortune in business ventures, and troublesome debts that hounded them for years, the Plymouth colony survived. I believe it was due largely to two reasons. The group was motivated by religious faith and it was family centered. Certain features conspired to make it the most influential in many early efforts in the New World. The perils the Plymouthians faced forced them to disregard social distinctions. They were not all of the same financial and educational status but they pulled together as a team in the face of hardship. Carver, Brewster, Bradford, Warren and others of the stalwarts cared for those who suffered the Great Sickness, waiting on them with their own hands. They left the feudal system behind them in the Old World. With them there were no hereditary privileges or titles. Leaders were elected by vote. Every individual was expected to work. The strong helped the weak. Unique among American colonists, they established a system under which the people governed themselves without the help of a king or his appointees.

They believed that the church and the state were made for man, that man was not destined to live as a slave of either. God and the moral law were the authority for faith and practice. The Plymouth Pilgrims developed some ideas on what a Congregational church was and how it could function. When Dr. Samuel Fuller, the Pilgrim physician, journeyed to Salem in 1629 to help fight the epidemic there, he was asked to describe the set-up of the Plymouth church. He did such a good job that the First Church of Salem decided to adopt this general pattern and call itself a Congregational church.

In 1636, after the Puritan migration, four men from Plymouth met with the governor of the colony and his assistants to draft the *General Fundamentals* which were adopted by the General Court of the Freemen, forming the first bill of rights in America.

THE PREAMBLE STATES that the colonists came "hither as freeborn subjects of the Kingdom of England", and claimed "all and singular privileges belonging to such." These fundamentals are summarized by Dr. Samuel E. Morison of Harvard in his recent book, *Story of the Old Colony of New Plymouth,* published by Knopf:

1. No laws be made or taxes laid without the consent of the body of Freemen or "their representatives legally assembled."

2. There will be a "free election, annually," of the Governor and Assistants, by the Freemen.

3. Every person has a right to equal and impartial justice.

4. No one may be punished "in respect of life, limb, liberty, good name or estate" except by some express law of the Colony, or by virtue of the English Common Law, if the case is not covered by the laws of Plymouth. And none shall suffer as aforesaid, without being brought to answer by due course and process of law.

5. All offenders are guaranteed a trial by jury "of twelve good and lawful men", and the defendant may challenge any of the jurors before the panel is made up.

6. No person may be condemned or sentenced without the evidence of at least two witnesses, or sufficient circumstantial evidence.

7. All sane persons twenty-one years of age may dispose of their property at will.

8. The Congregational churches shall

be protected and encouraged and all towns must provide for their ministers.

Time has proved that the Pilgrims were political pioneers of considerable maturity. They were more humane and tolerant than many contemporaries, refusing to resort to torture, burn criminals or punish anyone charged with witchcraft. They contended for the right of man to read, think and discuss in the never-ending quest for unfolding truth, affirming John Robinson's faith: "There is yet more light to break forth from God's word."

The Pilgrim heritage should be for us more than a memory of the forefathers. We can cherish the freedom and enlightenment for which they pioneered by helping preserve and revitalize this great drama of faith through underwriting the Plimoth Plantation and helping carry it through to completion. Millions of pilgrims through future years will visit the First Street and its nineteen cottages, the Fort-Meetinghouse, *Mayflower II* and catch something from this heroic epic. With our support the Plantation can develop into the greatest Congregational shrine in the New World. Every church should have a share in it.

Nothing in the annals of our history eclipses the spiritual power of this adventure. A handful of unknown voyagers overcame persecution, poverty, hunger, and loneliness through their faith in God. After their desperate voyage they faced a bleak winter world. "All things stand upon them with a weather-beaten face;" recorded Bradford, "and the whole country, full of woods and thickets, represented a wild and savage hue." There were no supplies and no opportunity to produce food for another nine months. There were sickness, weariness, and more debts in London, but these people held to a deep faith in God and in his providential care, and that providence was in evidence. The red-skinned foe proved friendly, not hostile. Squanto spoke the English tongue and showed them how to snare fish, trap beaver, glean food from the forests and plant corn. Caches of corn were uncovered when starvation seemed certain. The shallop was preserved in violent storms. They made good the claim of Robinson and Brewster in their appeal to Sir Edwin Sandys:

"We verily believe and trust the Lord is with us . . . and that He will graciously prosper our endeavors according to the simplicity of our hearts therein . . . We are knit together as a body in a most strict and sacred bond and covenant of the Lord . . . by virtue whereof we do hold ourselves straitly tied to all care of each other's good, and of the whole."

William Bradford, in reviewing the testings of his people asks, "What was it then that upheld them? It was God's visitation that preserved their spirits."

On this Thanksgiving we need to prepare our minds to be worthy of the spirit of *Mayflower II*. It may help us to reread the words inscribed on the sarcophagus on Coles Hill overlooking Plymouth Rock:

"This monument marks the burying ground in Plymouth of the Passengers of the *Mayflower*. Here, under cover of darkness, the fast dwindling Company laid their dead, levelling the earth above them lest the Indians should learn how many were their graves. Reader, History records no nobler venture for Faith and Freedom than that of this Pilgrim Band. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and cold, they laid the foundations of a State wherein every man, through countless ages, should have liberty to worship God in his own way. May their example inspire thee to do thy part in perpetuating and spreading throughout the world the lofty ideals of our Republic."

We are thankful for the spirit that inspired the British people to build and send us this twentieth century symbol of brotherhood. It is a reminder of what the human spirit achieved in 1620, which should quicken the courage of all men around the globe who strive today for truth and freedom."

THE MINISTER AND THEOLOGY

The following is a re-affirmation of the liberal position in Protestant Christianity. First presented as an installation paper at the First Congregational Church, North Adams, Mass., at our request Dr. Brallier has abstracted it for publication.

PILGRIMAGE INTO CONGREGATIONALISM

by VIRGIL V. BRALLIER

WHEN A MINISTER changes denominations after a number of years in the ministry we may properly ask, "What goes here?" It is my purpose to share with you some of the insights which have come to me in my pilgrimage into Congregationalism.

My early life and the first twelve years of my ministry were spent in a church which had its roots in the pietistic movement in Germany. This church almost in its entirety migrated to Pennsylvania in the early eighteenth century. From its beginning it tended toward a literalistic interpretation of the Bible and throughout its history has studied the scriptures for detailed commandments on the regulation of the sacramental and daily life of believers. Its attempt to translate Biblical truth into a code of ethics and action has tended to give it a perfectionist outlook. The utter seriousness with which it has sought to translate the will of God into specific conduct has been the source both of its greatest strength and its greatest weakness.

The claim of a religious system to comprehend the will of God has a powerful appeal to man, yet one of the ironies of religious history is that just as soon as a person or group of persons claim they are in possession of the truth, they are at that time in their moment of greatest danger. There is quite a fine line between a dedicated quest for the will of God on one hand, and the idolatry which claims to have found it on the other. A slight tipping of the scales and one is changed from a pilgrim into a pharisee. Or if one can succeed in tipping them in the opposite direction, he is changed from a pharisee to a pilgrim.

Although largely unaware of it when my pilgrimage began, I have come to see increasingly that it was my inner struggle to keep the scales in balance that sent me out from one church until I found another in which the quest could be waged more suitably. Perhaps many persons could carry on this entire quest within a single church. For myself it seemed important to have an outer change which reflected the shift of directions in the inner life.

It has seemed increasingly clear to me that one of the things most destructive of a genuine religious quality in life is the persistent tendency to solidify belief into absolutes. This is one of the perennial pitfalls in religious experience. Within man there is an incurable thirst for certainty. He is always trying to get life tied up in a neat package with all the answers in a secure place. So the religious quest, in what-

ever system, involves trying to stake out territory over which there can be no dispute.

How often it happens that the work of a master teacher is distorted, not by his enemies, but by those who claim to be his closest disciples. The keynote emphasis of the sermon on the mount was expressed in Jesus' words, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." Thus did Jesus declare the sterility of their legalism, but how rapidly did the followers of Jesus take the very words he had used to destroy legalism and build a whole new legalism from them. As another example consider what happened within Buddhism. The intense search of Gautama in the sixth century for the meaning of human existence ended in a religious subjectivism so deep that he was essentially agnostic toward all gods. Before his followers had finished they had not only deified him, but had also produced a whole swarm of gods to rule over every mood of the human spirit.

This is a recurring phenomenon that we may observe time and again in the history of religion. The drive for certainty is one of the priceless ingredients of the spiritual quest, yet at the very moment one claims he has found it, the genius that lies at the heart of religious experience is frozen. So the medieval church in its attempt to encompass the spirit of Jesus sorts out, arranges, classifies and comes up with a complete system for ordering life, including a full listing of mortal and venial sins and the proper prescription for each. The mood behind such an endeavor is, "Let's take the chance out of religion. If we get everything down in black and white then we know where we stand." So stifling became this system which had all the answers that the Reformation came as an inevitable explosion to release the spirit of man and proclaim once again that man lives by faith, and that though he must tread into the unknown it is safer than to have his spirit suffocated in the arms of an infallible Mother Church.

THE LONGING FOR certainty continues to reassert itself in new forms, so in time fundamentalism arises with a new dogmatism, claiming that everything man needs is well defined within a letter-perfect Bible. It's all there in black and white and all one needs to do is believe and obey. The rise of liberalism was inevitable, because the Spirit of God in man is too dynamic to be contained within any orthodoxy that man may devise. History does not rest in its relentless march and it is forever recording new efforts toward freedom which must be exerted against the new tyrannies which the old liberators have devised. Liberalism, in turn, so thoroughly identified itself with contemporary culture that it cracked in the seams at the very same places in which modern culture was falling apart. We have been slow to understand the words of Jesus when he declared that his spirit was a new wine which would forever crack any hardened old wineskins that tried to restrict it and hold it in.

"Our little systems have their day.
They have their day and cease to be,
But thou, O Lord, art more than they."

My spiritual pilgrimage which led me into Congregationalism drew at least some of its impetus from the gathering frustration over a system which was infected with the holy zeal of perfectionism, a perfectionism which the more nearly it attains its goal quenches the real genius of spiritual adventure. I think I know now that there is no insurance within Congregationalism or any religious system to prevent this spiritual hardening of the arteries which insists that one has finally arrived at absolute certainty. This is one of the most luring and dangerous temptations of the religious life no matter what church he may be in. Only as one continues to drink of the life-giving spirit

of our Lord and keeps his nerve to walk into the unknown will he understand what it means to live by faith and experience both the agony and joy of the living God who dwells within.

My prilgrimage has led me also to an increasing appreciation for the deep sense in which the beloved fellowship is involved in the redemption of personality. I must confess that for myself it seemed to take a long time for the really radical nature of the church's fellowship to come into active consciousness. What a tragedy that we must sometimes preach the gospel of love for years before its radical implications begin to echo within our own hearts. With the rock-ribbed conviction of the perfectionist ideal in my head I was sure that the church was a high and holy fellowship, and that it should keep its standards high, and further that all within it should accept the inner disciplines which would lead them in an ascending ladder of righteousness.

I have not changed my belief that the church is a high and holy fellowship, but somehow it also seems to include a lot wider variety of people than once it did. Surely there must be some there whose names are not included in any list of church membership. I see there, also, bleary-eyed persons whose very gaze betrays their hurt and frustration with life. I see men who have hard lines of cynicism tightening about their lips. I see young people, and some not so young, whose eyes flash with defiance. I see angry people there whose tongues are tart with bitterness. I see the moralist with his righteous robes drawn close. Yes, and there are those persons whose lives seem to mellow more with each passing year. Indeed, there are all kinds and conditions of men there mingling in this fellowship. And if no person is made to withdraw because he is caused to feel unwanted, if rather he is encouraged to open his heart and feelings, a bond of healing will flow among them the very quality of which needs the word *divine* to describe it.

What Jesus, St. Paul, Augustine, and Francis of Assisi and other sensitive leaders knew by intuitive or revealed wisdom, we are being forcefully reminded of again by the social scientist of our own generation. Although Freud is not remembered as a particularly religious person he started a landslide in human thought which is adding up to startling implications for man's spiritual enterprise. It was he who first began to explore, in at least semi-scientific fashion, the dynamic quality of human relationships for good or evil. The roots of human experience around which he did his exploratory work have flowered in our day into an intensely spiritual interpretation of life. The rank individualism of an earlier generation is beginning to give way to a sobering realization that human life is bound together in bundles and that the destiny of persons is inextricably interwoven with the lives of others.

Whether for good or ill a person's conception of himself is indissolubly bound up with the attitudes of others toward him. A classic example from the Bible is the woman who was caught in the act of adultery and brought to Jesus. Although she hoped to escape the actual penalty for her deeds, she saw herself in much the same light as those who brought her and were waiting with itching fingers to start pitching stones at her. She knew very well she was a tramp, because her society had planted this idea firmly within her. The dawning of a new and higher conception of herself came when for the first time she saw herself through the eyes of Jesus. Certainly no minister needs to go back so far as Bible times for lucid and abundant evidence of how deeply imbedded the self-conceptions of worthlessness may be ingrained into a person by parents and associates. Indeed human fellowship contains abundant opportunities for destructiveness.

The crucial question, however, is, Are we also able to believe in the healing possibilities in human fellowship? When a

man confides to his pastor, "I hated my father, I hated God, I think I have hated almost everyone" how does he convince this man that regardless of his hostility he is loved by God? How many times this tragic story has been enacted over and over in our society. A child grows up in an unloving environment. He dreams of the day when he will find a companion with whom he can share his life and love, and frequently he rushes into a hasty marriage thinking he has found what his heart is seeking. He resolves that whatever he does he will be loving to his wife and children. How rude the shock when finally surrounded by a family of his own he comes to the shattering realization that he is not able to love them, and this because he has received so little love that he has none to give. How shall this person learn to love? There is a mountain of clinical evidence which suggests that he will never learn to love unless within some relationship he receives a quality of love which accepts him through all his hostility and aggression and fear, which accepts him even when he is unacceptable to himself until finally he is inwardly convinced of a love that never fails. It is all very fine for some well-meaning Christian to say to such a person, "Yes, people have failed you, but the love of God will never let you down." Yet with all our ready assurances we must face the question of how many persons will be able to appropriate the love of God who have not experienced some real measure of love in human relationships.

It is right at this point that the church conceived as the body of Christ strikes us with frightening relevance. We think of Jesus Christ as the love of God made incarnate. He was a flesh and blood person who met men face to face in a living relationship, and they knew for the first time what love was, and through his eyes they began to see the startling dimensions of their own existence. It would appear that the secret of his power was that he met men face to face, person to person, heart to heart, and however much he met them as God he met them also as a fellow human being. This was the necessity of the incarnation. How shall a man meet God as an abstract idea? Does not the doctrine of the incarnation insist that the God of human life to be truly known must be encountered within human flesh? Whatever else the incarnation means surely it must mean no less than that.

In light of this what does it mean when we speak of the church as the body of Christ? Does it suggest that the church is the continuation of Christ's humanity, his flesh and blood, his means of humanly relating himself to men? In light of our emerging understandings of the indispensable role of relationships in the shaping and reshaping of personality, it seems to me we are confronted with an understanding of the church which is at once dynamic and almost frightening in its implications. Are not we who make up the fellowship of the church the indispensable humanity of Christ without which no effective relationship to God can be established by men? How many people may never know the love of God because a particular church fellowship fails to develop relationships which reach beyond superficial depths?

Once we begin to sense the way in which the redemption of personality is indissolubly linked to the meaningful fellowship between persons, we will be led to examine afresh each function of the church in terms of its possibilities for helping men come alive to the God who makes himself known through human fellowship. Then will our whole Christian enterprise be charged with meaning, for we will then know that within every relationship there is something of eternal destiny involved.

The point at which the implications of this strikes us with special urgency is the need for faith and courage to walk into the unknown in the area of human rela-

(*Continued on last page*)

NEWS ITEM
MAN, 55, LIES DOWN
IN STREET, IS KILLED

NEW YORK, July 12—A shabbily dressed, heavily bearded man, about 55, stepped slowly off a curb in downtown Manhattan today. He stopped in the crosswalk, looked around and lay down, stretching out on the asphalt. It was 2 a.m.

Seconds later, he was struck by a taxi and killed. Two passersby told police they had seen the man lie down in the roadway before the cab hit him.

THE KING IS DEAD

IN A TROLLEY one summer night
I heard a man whistling
He sat in front of me
Across the aisle
Laughing to himself.

There was no one else to watch
So I watched him.

His head kept twisting
Looking at the cards above me
Each one selling something
They made him laugh
He read each one aloud.

Soap, Liquor, Bras and Loans
And finally the one called Death.

"A Funeral Fit for a King
In case of death
Call Columbia 5-0432"
This made him howl
The tears ran down his cheeks.

Or sweat
It was a hot night.

He caught his breath
Stared out the window
Then slowly like a puppet
His head pulled round and up
And he began to read again.

"One of the Largest Undertakers in the World"
He read each word distinctly
"The Complete Funeral
Including our Famous 60 Services
Only $498."

What a bargain
That's for me.

He pulled the cord
Walked stiffly to the door
Down the hissing steps
Lurching out across the island
Into the stream of death.

The King is dead
Long live the Great Consumer.

—FREDERIC FOX

The following is a reprint, slightly revised by the author, of one used in THE QUARTERLY *some years ago. It is here republished by request of this Department and as a result of popular request for such an article. Dr. Freeman, formerly of the Commission on Evangelism, is at present pastor of the First Congregational Church, Montevideo, Minnesota.*

ONE SUGGESTED ORDER FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

by ELMER S. FREEMAN

ORDER OF SERVICE

(Confession and Forgiveness)

Minister: Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.

People: *Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

Minister: And the second commandment is like unto the first: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

People: *Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

Minister: Lord, have mercy upon us.

People: *Christ, have mercy upon us.*

Minister: Lord, have mercy upon us. Let us pray. Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, who of thy great mercy hast promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto thee, have mercy upon us, pardon and deliver us from all our sins; confirm and strengthen us in all goodness, and bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Instruction)

THE SERMON BY THE MINISTER

(Devotional Preparation for Communion)

Minister: Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all who truly turn to him:

Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Lift up your hearts.

People: *We lift them up unto the Lord.*

Minister: Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

People: *It is meet and right so to do.*

Minister: It is meet, right, and our bounden duty that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God.

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name, evermore praising thee, and saying:

Minister and People: (to be said or sung) *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory, Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.*

Minister: Let us pray.

O Lord and Father, according to the institution of Thy Son Christ our Lord, we celebrate before Thee, with these gifts which now we offer unto Thee, the memorial Thy Son hath commanded us to make. Here also we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto Thee, humbly beseeching Thee that we and all others who shall be partakers of this Sacrament may worthily receive it to our soul's good, be filled with Thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with Christ, that he may dwell in us and we in him.

We do not presume to come to this Thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in Thy manifold and great mercies. Make us truly and earnestly repentant of our misdoings, O our Father. Help us, we pray, to be in love and charity with our neighbors; strengthen our intention to lead a new life, following Thy commandments and walking from henceforth in Thy holy ways, that we may take this Sacrament to our great comfort.

As this bread was scattered upon the mountains, and having been gathered together became one loaf, so also, O Lord, gather Thy holy Church from every race and every country and city and village and household, and make it a living and universal Church.

And now, as our Saviour Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say

Our Father, who art in heaven. . . .

(*Here may be sung a Hymn*)

(The Blessing of the Bread and the Cup, and Communion)

Minister: In the night in which he was betrayed, Jesus, being at supper with the disciples, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you; Do this in remembrance of me.

So also I, ministering in his name do break bread before you in obedience to his command. May it preserve us pure and undefiled unto everlasting life. Take and eat it in remembrance that Christ died for us, and feed on him in our hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

The Distribution of the Bread.

Minister: Likewise after supper Jesus took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins; Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.

So also I, ministering in his name, do take this cup before you, in obedience to his command. May it preserve us pure and undefiled into everlasting life. Drink it, in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for us, and be thankful.

The Distribution of the Cup.

(Thanksgiving)

Minister: Let us pray.

Grant, O Lord, that the ears which have heard the voice of Thy songs may be closed to the voices of clamor and dispute; that the eyes which have seen Thy great love may also behold Thy blessed hope; that the tongues which have sung Thy praise may speak the truth; that the feet which have walked in Thy courts may walk in the regions of light; and that the souls of all who have received Thy blessed Sacrament may be restored to newness of life. Glory be to Thee for Thine unspeakable gift. Amen.

THE MINISTER AND THE WORLD CHURCH

Dept. Editor: WILLIAM L. BRADLEY, Hartford Seminary Foundation, Hartford, Conn.

Speaking before the International Congregational Council at Hartford this summer, Dr. Cooke, Associate General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, presented the following address. We regard it of such merit that, despite its length, we publish it in full.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORLD COUNCIL FOR THE MEMBER CHURCHES

by LESLIE E. COOKE

WHEN MR. CALDER wrote to me to ask me to give this address he suggested that I might speak about the contribution of the Congregational churches to the ecumenical movement. This I courteously declined to do and suggested rather that I might have the privilege of addressing you on the subject of the significance of the ecumenical movement for the member churches and for the Congregational churches in particular.

It was not that I did not approve the first subject, it is a very good subject, especially if it is framed not as "the contribution of the Congregational churches to the ecumenical movement", but "the c o n t r i b u t i o n of the Congregational churches within the ecumenical movement." I declined the subject for one reason because it has been rather well worked over. Practically every member church and practically every confessional organization has paid considerable attention to this subject. To look back over the proceedings of this Council at its Assembly at St. Andrew's is to discover that this was the tenor of much of the discussion there. Membership of the World Council does in fact challenge us to an examination of our own tradition and to try to specify what are the essential elements in our historic experience to which we must bear witness within the fellowship of the World Council.

It may be recalled that at St. Andrew's we discovered a considerable diversity among ourselves. The British Congregationalists affirmed that classic Congregationalism is expressed in the authority of the local church through the Church Meeting, and the representatives of the Congregational churches in the United States affirmed that for them classic Congregationalism found its expression in the nature and authority of Councils, especially through the Councils of county associations and state conferences and the General Council. The reality of these claims is in fact challenged by the hard facts of our Congregational experience. It is very difficult to find a Church Meeting in this classic sense among the Congregational churches of Britain, and indeed the exigencies of the political, social and economic developments of the welfare state have necessitated an increase in the corporate action of the churches through County Unions and National Assemblies. Indeed, who knows, before long we might find distinguished Congregationalists sitting alongside other distinguished free church men and in company with bis-

hops in a reconstituted House of Lords! In the United States, whether for theological or non-theological reasons, or for non-theological reasons which have been rationalized into theological ones, the claims that Congregationalism is expressed in the conciliar form of church government have been challenged by the assertion by certain churches of their independence of such conciliar authority.

Perhaps our very involvement in the ecumenical movement has revealed that neither of these emphases constitutes our specific witness, but that Dr. Lovell Cocks was much nearer the truth in his address at St. Andrew's when he affirmed "if Congregationalism as a historical movement makes sense at all, if in spite of all our defections and betrayals, inconsistencies and adulterations we Congregationalists have been able to make any contribution to the life and well being of the Church Universal, it is surely this: that through good report and evil report we have tried to take in utter seriousness the Lordship of Jesus, not only as our personal faith and public Gospel, but as the indispensible and all-sufficient foundation of our churchmanship." "Jesus is Lord, there is our authority for the Congregational way". In other words, the tradition of churchmanship in which we stand derives from the conviction that this is the most adequate, or at any rate the least inadequate way of witnessing in the Church Universal and to the world in which we are set, that Jesus is Lord. But to take that thought even a step further is to be teased by certain other disturbing questions: May not the obedience of our fathers be disobedience for us, their sons? Is not the real crux of the matter the Congregationalists' affirmation of their freedom to obey Jesus as Lord? May not this mean that in certain times and places obedience would mean presbyterial or even episcopal forms of government? Is not our essential witness to affirm that there is nothing sacrosanct about any particular form of church order and that form depends upon what is dictated by obedience to Jesus as Lord in a particular time and situation?

To state the truth either way, if we assert that a classic form of Congregationalism expressed in the autonomy of the local church and the Church Meeting is not simply for the "bene esse" of the church, but of the "esse" of the church, are we any different from those who make the same claims for Episcopacy or for the authority of Synods and Presbyteries? From the perspective of an ecumenical standpoint it is clear that in certain countries where the church leadership is state nominated and state imposed the obedience to Jesus as Lord involves emphasis upon the authority of the local church as it did in 17th century Britain. In certain other countries where the Christian community is a poor and struggling minority confronted with an enormous evangelistic task calling for a most carefully planned strategy and the deployment to the best advantage of all too meagre resources the obedience to Jesus as Lord might demand a presbyteral or episcopal order.

I HAVE SAID enough to show that I did not reject Mr. Calder's first suggestion for lack of any intrinsic interest in the subject itself.

But I asked to be excused from speaking on that subject because it is a highly dangerous subject in this sense that it puts ourselves, our churchmanship, our tradition, in the centre of the picture. To speak of the contribution of Congregationalism to the ecumenical movement or within it is to imply, or to run the risk of implying, that it is we and our tradition that are important and which must be preserved at all costs. It might even seem to suggest, as some at times have actually come near to suggesting, that if participation in the ecumenical movement or membership of the World Council involved what we would deem to be an inadequate recognition, a modification or an impairing of our traditional witness, then we should be compelled to withdraw. There might con-

ceivably arise on occasion when such a step for conscience sake will have to be taken. But my point is that such a step would inevitably be taken in error if this were the standpoint from which the judgment were to be made. Furthermore to think only in terms of what our contribution within the ecumenical movement is, is to have misunderstood the significance of the movement itself, and if such an attitude were persisted in by all the member churches or a majority of them, this would have the effect of reducing the movement to one of cooperation only of which the World Council would be but an instrument. The truth is that in the emergence of the ecumenical movement of this century and in the creation of the World Council of Churches something new happened. This movement represents the discovery and acknowledgment that there is a Christian community, a unity in Christ, which underlies the divisions of the church. At Edinburgh in 1937 the late Archbishop William Temple declared: "We could not seek union if we did not already possess unity. Those who have nothing in common do not deplore their estrangement." It was this recognition that there is a *koinonia* which exists prior to all more formal agreements and the expression of that recognition in a World Council of Churches which constituted what has so frequently been quoted as "the great new era." In the formation of the World Council of Churches a new community of churches was born, established on a basis not of cooperation, but on a recognition that the churches find their unity in Christ and that they must make "common cause in the search for the expression of that unity in work and in life."

The resolution adopted at Amsterdam on "The authority of the Council", after affirming that the Council desires to serve the churches as an instrument whereby they may bear witness together to their common allegiance to Jesus Christ, and after disavowing any intention of usurping the functions which belong to the constituent churches, or of becoming a single unified church structure, goes on to declare: "The purpose of the Council is to express its unity in another way. Unity arises out of the love of God in Jesus Christ which, binding the constituent churches to Him, binds them to one another. It is the earnest desire of the Council that churches may be bound closer to Him and therefore closer to one another. In the bond of His love they will desire continually to pray for one another and to strengthen one another in worship and in witness, bearing one another's burdens and so fulfilling the love of Christ".

Again in the conclusion of the famous Toronto Statement "The Church, the Churches and the World Council of Churches", it is asserted: "As the churches enter into closer contact with each other, they will no doubt have to face new decisions and problems, for the Council exists to break the deadlock between the churches". In a word, the ecumenical movement is not a side issue and the World Council of Churches is not an outside body, an extra, a sort of ecclesiastical luxury which the member churches may permit themselves, but rather the ecumenical movement is the central fact bringing our traditions into a new light of judgment and the World Council of Churches is a new community in which to accept membership is to be prepared to face new challenges to our churchmanship.

Albert Outler in his book "The Christian Tradition and the Unity We Seek," summed this up when he wrote: "The ecumenical movement in our time has provided a fellowship of churches in which Christians with diverse and separate histories might discover and acknowledge the common share of other Christians in the one *koinonia* in which Jesus Christ is truly Lord and the Holy Spirit constantly resident". Important then as the question is "what is the contribution which Congregational churches must make within the ecumenical movement?", of far great-

er importance is this question: "What is the significance of the ecumenical movement for the Congregational churches?"

There are two ways of answering that question. The one is to speak of the contribution which the World Council of Churches makes to its member churches. To state the issue bluntly, it would be possible to answer the question by enquiring "what do the member churches get out of the World Council?" That is a perfectly legitimate and not an unworthy question. A member church may well look for an enrichment of its own life by virtue of its membership in the World Council of Churches and its involvement in the ecumenical movement. There are certain things which the churches can do together which they cannot do separately. There are certain things which they may provide for the service of each other which no individual church, however strong and wealthy, can provide for itself. There are experiences which belong to the churches because of their togetherness into which they could not enter separately. We could multiply illustrations of this. I think for example of the extension of the influence which the churches together can bring in the areas where political decisions are taken. This influence could never belong to a single church. To look at the work of the Churches' Commission on International Affairs across the years is to see this point clearly. The Commission has made available to the member churches valid information about political situations. It has represented the expressed judgment of the churches to political authorities. It has guided the churches in their own representations to their own governments. It has sometimes called the attention of churches to potentially dangerous situations and has helped to frame the forms in which Christian judgment can be expressed. The Commission has notable achievements to its credit: in influencing the truce in the Korean War, in helping to frame the Declaration of Human Rights, in seeking the establishment of peace observer commissions, in influencing the legislation for the protection of refugees, and more recently in leading the churches in their thinking and action concerning nuclear test and nuclear warfare. This has been achieved because together the churches have been able to set aside men who have submitted themselves to those disciplines by which the necessary technical competence in these political matters could be acquired. Such technical competence is the prerequisite for the commanding of respect and recognition by those whose daily work is in these fields. Or we might think of all that the churches have provided together in the realms of study and research. Consider the rich benefit bestowed upon the individual member churches because of the possibility of bringing leading thinkers and scholars of the world together to engage in all the conversations and discussion of Faith and Order, to wrestle with the great doctrine of Christian hope, or to engage in a study of Christian responsibility in the areas of rapid social change. All this affects, even though it may be unconsciously, the thinking and experience of the individual churches.

We might consider the enormous and increasing ministry to human need which together the churches have exercised and are exercising. There is the Service to Refugees which, in one aspect of its activity, has in the last six years resettled more than 100,000 refugees in new lands and new homes. There is the great outpouring of Christian compassion in feeding the hungry and caring for the sick and rescuing the victims of disaster of war or natural catastrophe. In such ministries last year the churches poured out some 80 million dollars worth of aid in one form or another.

Of these and many other activities we might well speak when we deal with the relevance of the World Council of Churches for the member churches. The Congregational churches no less than any

other communion have been the beneficiaries of these rich gifts made possible because the churches together are involved in the ecumenical movement and in membership of the World Council.

There is another way of dealing with this question, and it is the way on which I want to put the greater emphasis. It is less consoling, it is profounder, and it is more disturbing. It is the way which becomes plain to us when we ask "To what is it the churches expose themselves when they become members of a World Council of Churches?" Such membership, as far as Congregational churches are concerned, means that they, no more than any other church, can never have any rest from the continual challenge to Christian unity. The fact of the World Council of Churches is a double-edged fact. It means that the churches have found a certain unity, that they have an acknowledged underlying *koinonia* in Christ, but it means so long as it exists that the churches have not fully realized and manifested that unity which it is their Lord's will that they should have.

This exposure to the continual challenge of our divisions, this perpetual and often painful renewal of our discontent, comes not only through the discussions of Faith and Order—it does of course come that way. The continuing systematic search for the basis of unity, the unceasing processes of mutual interpretation, the perpetual definition and re-definition of what the churches already have in common, which is the task of Faith and Order, mean that we cannot but be reminded that the churches are divided and that their obedience demands that they should persistently seek their unity in Christ. But the challenge does not only come from this quarter. Indeed for the rank and file membership of the churches it may not come from this area in its sharpest form. Faith and Order discussions must often seem to the members of the churches to be the field of the scholars and the theologians, the nuances and niceties of whose balanced statements are beyond their comprehension and, when understood at all, leave no impression of striking relevance. But the challenge to a perpetual discontent with our divided state comes from the fact that the churches are politically, socially, culturally and racially divided. Were we to find common doctrinal agreement, were we led to that mutual recognition of churchmanship and validity of one another's ministries, were we in a word to find unity where at the moment we are most painfully separated at the Lord's Table, we should still be exposed to the challenge of our disunity because of political, cultural, social and racial causes.

To be in membership with the World Council of Churches is to find ourselves cheek by jowl with the churches of East and West, politically speaking; it is to find ourselves side by side with churches with vastly different cultural backgrounds of East and West, geographically speaking; it is to find ourselves in juxtaposition with churches which come from different social milieux (although be it said that diversity here is not as great as perhaps it ought to be); it is to find ourselves in company with churches of the same tradition, and the same ecclesiastical order, which are racially segregated.

If we do not want to be disturbed by these most painful facts, then we had better withdraw into a narrowly denominational life. If we do not intend to wrestle with these facts, then we have an obligation to withdraw, for it would be hypocrisy to remain in a movement and an organization which interprets obedience to the one Lord as meaning commitment to a continued endeavour to overcome these divisions.

Exposure to the challenge, to seek to manifest the unity of the church, comes too from involvement in the ministries of mutual aid and the service of the churches together to human need. "Inter-Church Aid is a permanent obligation of a World Council of Churches which seeks to be true to its name", declared a resolution

of one of the earliest of the Central Committees, that at Chichester in 1949. As the churches fulfill this service so they find themselves brought into relationship with one another. The question of continued separation becomes all the more poignant for churches which have stretched a helping hand across the boundaries of confession and tradition and for that church to whom that helping hand has been extended.

I recall that two years ago we appealed for help for the victims of floods in West Pakistan. Most of the Christians in the worst devastated area were Anglicans. Among the gifts received was a substantial one from the United Church of Canada. This was forwarded to the Church in the stricken area who, on receipt of it, thought a mistake had been made, for they could not believe that a church of a very different tradition should have come to their aid. It would not be possible to estimate the contribution which has been made to the development of relationships between the Protestant churches and the ancient Orthodox churches because of Inter-Church Aid. These ancient churches, set in countries of great political and social upheaval or driven into exile, have been sustained over many years in this way. Great barriers of misunderstanding have been thus removed. Orthodox churches have become aware of the manifest evidences of the spirit in the life and witness of Protestant churches. Protestant churches have become aware of their own indebtedness to the ancient churches which through the years have withstood the assaults of the infidel, the pagan and the materialist, and have preserved intact so many of the riches of the Christian tradition and have been custodians of the Gospel. Churches thus drawn together in mutual aid find their separation from each other in doctrine and tradition increasingly intolerable.

There is a tendency for us Congregationalists not to be too deeply moved by all this. This may be necessary for churches which are rooted in a certain tradition and based on certain dogmatic foundations, which have made exclusive claims and affirmed that theirs is the true church. But we say: through the very concept of Congregationalism runs a truly catholic principle. Are not Congregationalists free, are not their churches and their communion table open to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ? Congregationalism, we argue, has no hesitation in recognizing the validity of the ministries of other communions. All this is true. There is at the heart of Congregationalism a genuinely catholic principle. Yet when it comes to the point of implementing an action for Christian unity, in supporting and carrying out an instrument of union, how difficult it is to take action because we have made no preparation in our church organization for carrying out the negotiations to make effective the catholic principle which we claim to embody.

Involvement in the ecumenical movement and membership in the World Council means also that member churches are continually challenged to fulfill their mission. This means that they are to proclaim the Lordship of Christ over the whole world and to the end of time. This is not the place to rehearse the development of the conviction in the church over the last 300 years concerning its missionary obligation. It would take a treatise, perhaps many treatises, to do so. We are aware of the seeming under-emphasis upon this obligation in the thought of the Reformers. We are aware how in the English speaking world and on the continent of Europe through the evangelical revival and the pietistic movement respectively, God gave to some in the churches this vision of the missionary task and warmed their hearts and strengthened their wills to undertake it, so that while official church leaders seemed cool and apathetic, these men and women on whom the Lord had laid His hands, banded themselves together into societies to carry the Gospel to

the whole world. We are aware of the significance of the fact that the ecumenical movement in this century found its first expression in the creation of a world wide organization to express this missionary concern. We are also aware of the developments which, please God, by 1961 will see the coming into being of one ecumenical body, uniting in itself this whole concept of Church and Mission.

All this means that all the churches in this new community will have no rest, no escape from the persistent challenge to fulfill their mission. To use the contemporary way of expressing this fact, we have now come to see that in the life of the f e l l o w s h i p (*koinonia*) of the churches, mission (*apostole*), witness (*marturia*), service (*diakonia*), are not separate activities to be dissociated in any way from one another. They do not stand in any hierarchical relationship to one another. They are interwoven, interdependent, and together constitute the Church's Mission.

This is the ecumenical insight and experience which God has given us in this century. This is the restless ferment of Christian thought and the disturbing challenge to our church and missionary organizations.

There are all sorts of indications of this and I will mention three of them. First is the fact that the missionary enterprise has been the means of bringing churches into being. These churches now seek to take their place within the fellowship of churches in equal status with the rest, and that means with those older churches who were in fact their parents.

Second is the fact that the missions which gave these churches birth operated under the protection of imperialistic and colonial powers. They were, perhaps often unconsciously, a part of that impact of the culture and the technological society of the West which has brought revolution and upheaval to the lands of Asia and Africa. The churches in these lands must now make it patently clear that they are churches of their own people and not the last remaining outposts of a retreat in colonialism.

Third is the fact that in many of these new nations missionary witness in the classic sense is not permitted and new ways have to be found of giving testimony to the Lordship of Christ. All this constitutes a great problem, the solution of which we do not yet see. One thing, however, is clear. We will not get the measure of the problem, let alone begin to solve it, except by an ecumenical approach, by ecumenical thinking and strategy. I sometimes think that one of the reasons why we are finding it difficult to articulate a theology of mission in this century, why we seem to have lost so much of the appeal and urgency of the missionary calling, why our attempts to deal with the whole problem of the communication of the Gospel seem often to be no more than the giving of long answers to questions which people are not asking, is because we have not yet learned to trust the togetherness which God has given us. Cooperation, partnership, even policies of missionary comity, are proving inadequate because they begin on this assumption of the inviolate sovereignty of a church and a mission and proceed to that degree of cooperation which that assumption permits. We shall not really fulfill the mission of the church in this day until we start from the recognition that there is one sovereignty only, that of Christ; one obedience to proclaim His Lordship together, and in the light of that to assess what responsibility and rights, if it is proper to speak of rights, which belong to the individual communions. This is of course thoroughly disturbing. It involves such changes in thought and organizational patterns as to constitute a revolution.

So far there is little evidence that any church has begun to take it seriously, although there are encouraging signs that some churches will no longer plan their mission without reference to ecumenical

considerations. But membership in the World Council means that there will be no rest from the demands of this Copernican revolution.

Finally, and closely related to this, involvement in the ecumenical movement and membership of the World Council means exposure to a persistent demand for a fuller understanding of what it is to witness to the Gospel. To find ourselves in this new community of churches is to be made aware of depths and dimensions of Christian truth which we had not understood. At the risk of personal testimony let me illustrate what I mean. My own theological training was in the "between" years. The period of liberal theology was closing, the *eclat* with which it had begun had ended. A sense of inadequacy was manifest even in those who taught, and a general discontent was everywhere abroad. The revival of biblical theology with all that it has brought of fresh insight and new certainty, had not really begun. There were whole fields of Christian doctrine of which I knew something academically, but which seemed to have little relevance. The relevance of eschatology, for example, made little or no impression upon me. It was not until I became involved in the life and work of the World Council of Churches that I began to see the meaning of this dimension of Christian truth. It was as I met with men who were caught up in the crisis of Europe that I began to realize that this was an essential part of a living faith. As I began to see the meaning of this dimension in the discussions on Christian Hope before the Evanston Assembly, I began to realize how much had been lacking from a Gospel which for twenty years I had been seeking to proclaim Sunday by Sunday. Similarly too the interpretation of ecclesiastical history in which I had been trained had created a prejudice against the Orthodox Church and against the Catholic tradition. Were these not corrupt and unreformed, were they not riddled with superstition, and was not the use of ikons a form of idolatry? It was only after I began to share in the life of the World Council, began to meet friends who were representative of the Orthodox Church, and who stood in the Catholic tradition, that I began to understand and see a dimension of faith and worship, the "other worldliness" of the Christian faith, and I learned what place adoration, the communion of saints, the whole Johannine emphasis upon Christian love have in Christian thought and experience. I suspect in this matter I speak not only for myself. This happens in realms beyond that of theological understanding. It happens in the understanding of the proclamation of the Gospel itself. Two things at least are necessary for witnessing, an apprehension of the Gospel and an understanding of the situation in which it is to be proclaimed. The ecumenical experience is not only necessary for the former, it is indispensable for the latter.

Dr. Visser 't Hooft, in his Dale Lectures on *The Renewal of the Church*, quotes the story which John Knox told himself of what he said to Mary, Queen of Scots: "Her Grace accused me of having irreverently handled her in the pulpit; that I denied. Ye said what ado had I do speak of your marriage, what was I that I should mell with such matters.' I answered that as touching nature, I was a worm of this earth and yet a subject of this Commonwealth, but as touching the office wherein it had pleased God to place me I was a watchman, both over the realm and over the kirk of God gathered with the same. For that reason I was bound in conscience to blow the trumpet publicly, oft as ever I saw any upfall, any appearing danger, either to the one or to the other."

"A watchman over the realm and over the kirk of God." This at any rate describes one of the functions of a witnessing church. Yet how can any one communion, however large its membership, however widespread its communion, fulfill that task? It is only in the fellowship

of the whole Christian Church that we begin to understand what the situation is in which we have to witness. It is only from a position in a world-wide community that we can speak relevantly to a world situation. "Ye shall be my witnesses, not only tells what the church should do, it tells what it shoud be," wrote Harry S. Boer in *Pentecost and the Missionary Witness of the Church*. We cannot proclaim the one Lord from a divided church.

I know that these are not comfortable reflections. I know that they call for a reorientation of our thinking concerning our specific witness as Congregational churches and also of the role of this our world confessional body, the International Congregational Council. I think it was William James who in describing the mechanics of conversion said that what took place in conversion was that a truth which had been on the periphery of the mind moved into occupation of the centre of the mind. This is the kind of conversion which God is calling for through the ecumenical movement: That ecumenicity which has been and still is largely peripheral to the life and thinking of the churches should become central, that instead of thinking first of our witness and then of our place in the community of churches we should first think of our place in that fellowship of all Christians and then in the light of it of our life and witness. This is a critical issue for our churches and for all the churches. Will they themselves trust the Gospel truth "that He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake and the Gospel shall find it".

The answer which the churches give will be critical for the whole ecumenical movement and for the World Council of Churches. Should the churches' reply be negative, then once more the ecumenical vision will fade because men have been disobedient to it and the World Council will be left as one more institution for co-operation, imposing, efficient, and doubtless useful to a degree, but nonetheless a sad memorial to the faithlessness and unbelief of the people of God.

PILGRIMAGE—(*Continued from page 28*)

tionships. So many of our relations, within the church as well as outside it, are guarded and tentative. Because of our desire for safety we usually venture only into areas which are already well explored. Because of our desire to be undisturbed we make our affectional investments with caution, so that too heavy demands will not be placed upon us. Because of our uncertainty about the worth and meaning of our own person we hold back from sharing with our brother those secrets of our inner life which might call forth a creative response in his own. Who can estimate how many opportunities for creative growth are lost because of our desire for safety, our desire to be undisturbed and our fear and anxiety to enter the unknown with the man who stands by our side? Yet if it is up to the church to be the continuing humanity of our Lord can we escape the imperative responsibility for a creative and imaginative fellowship which is ever willing to pioneer in human relationships?

I have tried to point out two of the concerns which came into prominence for me as I made the pilgrimage into Congregationalism. Considering religious background from which this pilgrimage began, I think it was not accidental that the concerns I dealt with came into focus at the most crucial stage of the transition. So long as the movement into Congregationalism remains a pilgrimage it will demand a continuing need for exploration with the understanding that "there is yet more truth to break forth from God's word". It is this spirit within our fellowship which should give each of us, at whatever stage he finds himself in the pilgrimage, the courage to keep pushing the frontiers of our faith for fresh understandings of God's purposes for us today.